— Satya Pal

Sixty-years of Congress By Satya Pal Parabodh Chandra

Preface

We have great pleasure in presenting this book " Sixty Years of Congress " as a souvenir—a token of affection and gratitude for the Congress, on the auspicious occasion of its Diamond Jubilee cleberations. We are almost at the end of our journey. In the words of Mahatma Gandhi we have reached the portals of Swaraj and it is in the fitness of things that India should take a stock of what it has been able to achieve and how. This is also the right occasion to pay our homage to the unknown and so far unappreciated heroes and martyrs to whom India owes a heavy debt of gratitude. Eminent leaders undoubtedly deserve honour and glory to the fullest extent, but we must not forget the innumerable who unhesitatingly staked all they had, who unstintingly offered their blood and bones for their country.

We have tried to make the book a complete record of Congress achievements, and have also included an account of the Extremist activities in India and abroad, which have contributed substantially towards the attainment of this goal.

None is more conscious than ourselves of our shortcomings. We had to face innumerable difficulties, paper shortage, printing inconveniences, and other allied handicaps which have prevented us from doing as full a justice to the subject as we desired.

To compensate for this we havede cided to publish a comprehensive Political History of India at a later date. The present book will serve the purpose of being an introduction to that big

Introduction

'Give me Blood and I Promise you Freedom'

—NETAJI

'Who lives if India dies and who dies if India lives.'

INDIA has lived for centuries and centuries and has survived the onslaughts of time, and attacks and assaults of invaders, marauders, plunderers and conquerors, robbers, and dacoits, because it has a message to give to humanity. In the words of Mazzini 'God has written a line of His thought over the cradle of every people. That is its special mission. It cannot be cancelled. It must be freely developed.' India has since the dawn of human existence given light and life to the whole world. India has something original to contribute to the culture and civilisation of the world in almost every department of human life and on account of her present subjugation and degradation, India has of late been unable to properly perform its mission to the world because of the silence imposed on her on account of British domination. This must go, lock, stock and barrel. The interests of India demand it, the interests of the British demand it, the interests of humanity, in general, demand it. The world is poorer and shall remain as such unless and until India is once again the messenger of all that is pure and noble in man, and unless India speaks freely with a free tongue and independent brain. India has a glorious past. India has a still more glorious future. The present is dark and dismal, pathetic and painful, torturing and troublesome, but all this is bound to go and go for ever. Britons have trampled with their heavy boots over the sensitive, delicate susceptibilities of an ancient, highly civilised and cultured nation. But out of the past is built the future. We will drink deep of the eternal fountains that are behind and then look forward, march forward and make India brighter, greater, and much higher than she ever was. Our

book. We hope and trust that our efforts will be appreciated and this book will have a warm reception.

We are grateful to Mr. B. Sanyal and the Gazel Publicity Service, for their attractive designs and to Mr. Dina Nath of Commercial Halftone for the blocks. To Mr. S. A. Latif of the Lion Press we owe a special debt of gratitude, who at the cost of his health and pressing business demands has printed this book in a very attractive manner in such a short space of time with a view to make it possible for us to present it at the Diamond Jubilee Session of the Congress. Lala Hans Raj, Managing Agent and Directors of Azad Hind Publications Limited, deserve our gratitude for the guidance and unstinted co-operation they gave us.

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ancestors were great. We must always keep that before our eyes. We must learn the elements of our being, the blood that courses in our veins. We must have faith in that blood and what it did in the past and out of that faith and consciousness of past greatness we must build an India yet greater than that which she has been.

We possess and have from all time possessed the key to supreme wisdom. Our culture, our civilisation, our philosophy, and our morality are on a higher plane of thought than the West has ever reached. India is no longer on her knees for boons. She is now on her feet for Rights.

BRITISH DOMINATION

It was the most unfortunate hour in the annals of our country when the Europeans in general and the British in particular landed on this soil. British domination has been a persistent and thorough exploitation of the country by the foreigners.

It is indeed a sorrowful and sad spectacle that a nation which owes so much to India should have treated her in such a ruthless and savage manner. We shall cite a few instances to support our contention.

Destruction of Village Organisation

India is mainly a land of agriculture and so the bulk of Indian nation lives in villages and in the past village was an organised community—organised for independent self-existence containing the necessary elements for a full and satisfactory social life, educated and cultured. The villager owned the land on which he lived and worked. We had specialisation of functions and division of labour: Headman, Accountant, Watchman, Laundryman, Superintendent of Tanks and Watercourses, Brahmana, the Priest, Schoolmaster, Astrologer, Washerman, Barber, Smith, Carpenter, Potter, Cow-keeper, Doctor, Musician, Dancing Girl, Poet, Weaver, a number of artisans and workers at other crafts, Stone masons, Goldsmiths, Coppersmiths. Each village had well-organised communities. These officers and servants were all paid by shares in the village lands. Land was cultivated in common but the produce was divided. Pasture land was common. We had Panchayats which possessed civil and criminal jurisdiction within its boundaries. It was not likely that anyone who cared to live a comfortable life would resort to an untruth before a council of his fellows. The habit of obedience to Panchayat is in the blood of people. Panchayats have been the most stable institutions of India

and only vanished under the pressure of East India Company's domination. India is democratic in spirit. The present condition in the Indian village presents a heart-breaking contrast to its past. If India as a nation is not to pass away, she must be rescued from that fate by restoring the villages to their former prosperity. The villages and the village community have been broken up. The old self-sufficiency is gone. It has been replaced by exclusiveness, mutual ill-will and oppression. The huge indebtedness of the peasant cultivator is proverbial. Millions of the people know not as to what it is to have their hunger fully satisfied. The poverty of the people thus considered by itself is appalling. Thirty-six lakhs of the people died in the Bengal famine due to starvation and its after-effects. These disastrous results are due to British domination and British exploitation. Two thousand years before Magasthenes spoke of the abundant means of existence and today millions and millions know not what a square meal is. The results of the insufficient food continuing year after year on the vitality of the peasants are shown by their slight resistance to epidemics and to all forms of disease.

EDUCATION

One of the most splendid pages of the past history of India is that on which are written the records of its education. We find a highly developed University education for the classes in which deep learning was the object of life, and for those by which the Government was carried on, the sons of Brahmans, of monarchs and nobles and also of wealthy members of the great merchant community, the organisers of production and distribution; the sons of the latter two classes were trained in the Universities on an understanding not only of literature and science but also of arts and crafts, so that on their return home they might intelligently carry on their work. The highest Hindu intellectual training was based on the practice of yoga and produced as its fruit those marvellous philosophical systems: the six Darshans and the Brahma Sutras which are still the delight of scholars and the inspiration of Occultists and Mystics.

Dr. Rabindra Nath Tagore says :—

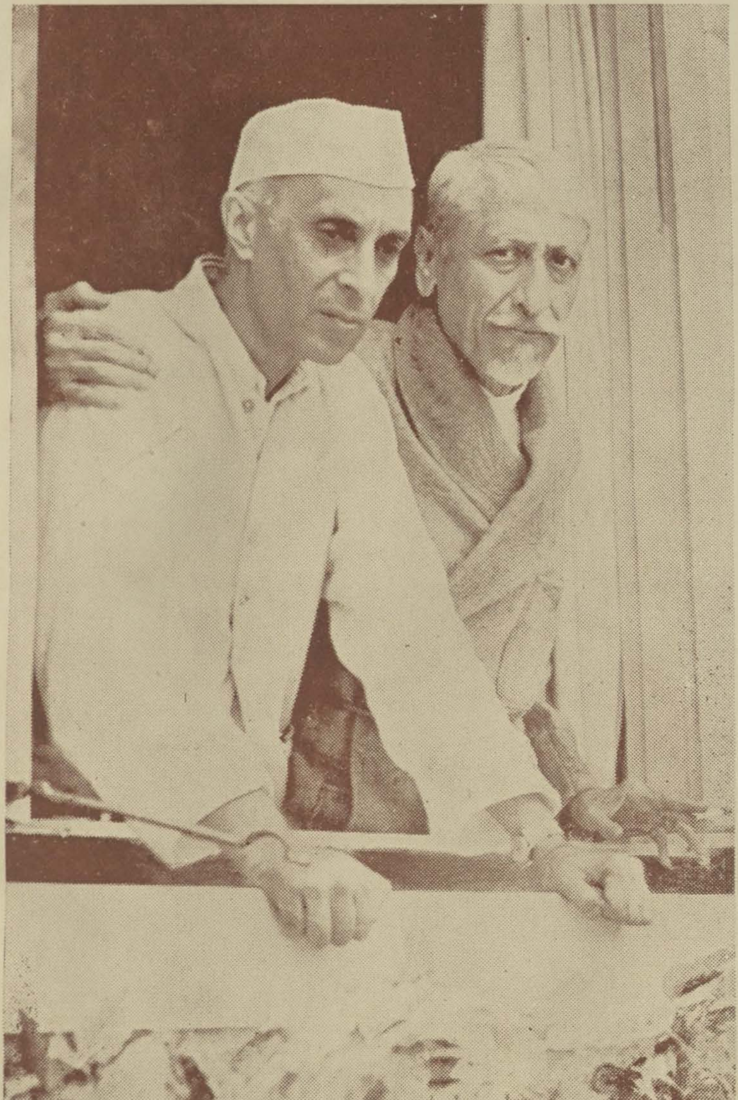
"A most wonderful thing that we notice in ancient India is that here the forest not the town is the fountain head of all its civilisation. In these forests though there was human society there was enough of open space, of aloofness. There was no jostling. Still this aloofness did not produce inertness in the Indian mind. Rather it rendered it all the brighter. It is the forest that has nurtured the two great ancient ages of India—the Vedic

and Budhistic. As did the Vedic Rishis, Lord Buddha also showered his teaching in many woods of India. The royal palace had no room for him. It is the forest that took him into its lap."

The current of civilisation that flowed from its forests inundated the whole of India. The most ancient Hindu University was at Takshashila or Taxila which was destroyed by the barbarian white Huns in 455 A.D. The fame of this University as a seat of learning was of course due to its great teachers. They are always spoken of as being world renowned, being authorities, specialists and experts in the subjects they professed. Students were drawn from all classes and ranks of society and from different and distant parts of the Indian continent making it the intellectual capital of India of those days. The extraordinary range of subjects taught in these ancient Universities is amazing. Vedas, Ithasas, Puranas, Archery, Astronomy, Fine Arts, Music and Architecture. The University of Nadya (Navadviapa) in Bengal is of great importance. In South there was an institution called Sangam. It was one of the academies which were standing bodies of the most eminence, among the learned men of the time in all branches of knowledge.

In the Buddhist period Nalanda holds the place that Takshashila held in the Hindu. It was a vast university, and towers, domes and parlours stood amidst a paradise of trees, gardens and fountains. Ten thousand Buddhist monks and novices were lodged and supplied with every necessity. All the inmates were lodged, taught, and supplied with vestments without charge. They studied the sacred books of all religions. In like manner they studied all the sciences specially arithmetic and medicine. Medicine appears to have made great progress in the Buddhist age when hospitals were established all over the country. The extraordinary range of subjects taught in these ancient universities is amazing and the more so when we remember that a student was expected in many cases to know by heart the books he studied. He had to study all the four Vedas, Ithasa, Purana, Grammar, Rituals, Science of Numbers, Physics, Chronology, Logic, Polity, Technology and many of the sciences and fine arts. In the Mohammedan period the Madrasa was a very commodious building embellished with lofty domes and situated in an extensive garden adorned over alleys and avenues and all that human art, combined with nature, could contribute to make the place fit for meditation. After this in the Mohammedan period an outstanding lover of learning and pattern of toleration was the great Akbar who argued on profound points of science, the history of civilization and the wonders of nature. But now, India once known over the world for her education whose

"Till death doth us part!"



Each the guide of the other

universities drew students from Europe and Asia is regarded as the most backward of civilised countries. In India hardly an anna per head is spent on education. The present state of education is more poignant because of its terrible contrast with the glorious past. Millions and millions are being spent on the Army but there is very little money provided for Education.

The experiment of educating in a foreign tongue has tended to denationalise our students and has closed to them the history of their country. It offered them knowledge which they could not assimilate because they were struggling to follow the language while they should have heen grasping the facts. A still more serious injury was done to the Indian people by imposing English education in a mutilated form for it was devoid of the religious and moral training. There is no subtler way of devitalising a country than to make the language of the upper classes, of the law, of the courts of the colleges, a foreign tongue and to require a knowledge of this foreign tongue for service. When that great bird of prey, the East India Company winged its way eastward and descended on India ravaging and destroying, filling itself fat with ill-gotton spoil, Education naturally shared in the general ruin.

Every village had its school and this meant that the whole country was educated. The village system had in the course of ages become a singularly perfect economic institution with its various organs sustaining the common life. It was a body, an individual organised for a rich and healthy life. It is now dying in a slow agony, its education destroyed and its industries have been ruined.

The crimes of the East India Company are many and grievous but that of plunging a rich and educated country into frightful poverty and into illiteracy must be held to be the blackest. Up till now—even after a couple of centuries of British administration not more than 10% of the population could read while in U.S.S.R. in 1932 after only 15 years of Soviet administration 93% of the children were educated.

A Government must be judged not by the pretensions of its spokesmen but by its actual and effective contribution to the well-being of the people. The British have betrayed the great trust and have sacrificed the happiness of millions of India to bloat the pockets of a few capitalists at home. The real object of education is to train the emotions, to love all that is noble and beautiful, to sympathise with the joys and sorrows of others, to inspire to

service, to find joy in sacrifice for great causes and for the helpless to make the man a good citizen of a free and spiritual commonwealth. All these have been blown to winds and the type of education now being imparted is killing the best that we have in our culture.

INDUSTRIES

The despatches of the East India Company to their representatives in India clearly prove that this Company came to India to exploit her. They came to shake the Pagoda tree which by now they have made barren. What was a garden of Eden when they came has become a desolate wilderness, because of their ruthless policy of plunder and exploitation. In the 17th Century one Bengal village, Kassimbazar was exporting annually 2,200,000 lbs. of silken goods. That is all a thing of the past now.

The English came to a land overflowing with gold and silver brocades, carpets of silk and gold. An emperor had a throne of the estimated value of more than 8 crores of rupees. India was never found poor until she reachad the 19th century A.D.

India has been a country of industries, not of factories, of handicrafts not of power machinery. No country can be prosperous which depends entirely on the raw products of its soil. Crafts must flourish as well as agriculture and from their union is born prosperity in India. The peasants averse to emigration starve at home. The destruction of village industries has aggravated agricultural difficulties.

Lancashire was further aided to supplant India woven fabrics, by the astounding policy of Britian which taxed Indian-produced cloth for the benefit of the Lancashire products, imposing what was called the Cotton-Excise and she protected Lancashire imports against the competition of handmade cloth by taxing Indian products. A duty was levied on the import of all Indian cloth in England and an Act was passed forbidding their import. In fact, the import and sale of such goods was made an offence. After a time the Indian trade with Britain was killed and Lancashire having mastered the English market then demanded the opportunity of supplanting Indian industry in India. Indian Industries were thus destroyed. The policy of the East Indian Company was to reduce India to the condition of a plantation that she might supply English manufacturers with raw materials and receive a portion of that back as manufactured articles and the price of home made cloth was also increased by cotton excise with that end in view.

BRITISH POLICY

A bureaucratic administration conducted by an imported agency and centring all power in its hands and undertaking all responsibility has acted as a dead weight on the soul of India killing in us all sense of incentive for the lack of which we are condemned. Atrophying the nerves of action and what is most serious, necessarily dwarfing in us all feelings of self-respect.

India in the past has shown that the highest spirituality does not prevent but ensures the greatness of achievement in the many aspected splendour of a nation. And under the shelter of her sublime religion, she developed a literature of unparalleled intellectual power, philosophical and metaphysical, her art flowered into exquisite beauty, her dreams still purify and inspire. Her physical property endured millenium after millenium and her wealth was the envy of the world. As soon as she is fully free to develop on her own lines she will again reveal her ancient glory and even excel it in future. Robbed of liberty she is treading the path of death and will soon leave the world only the memory of what she was.

Critical are the coming years wherein the decision must be made. Let India remember what she was and realize what she may be. Then shall her sun rise once more in the East and fill the Western lands with light. Her salvation lies in full Independence. Nothing else can preserve and renew her vitality slowly ebbing away before our eyes.

The British have so far been like an army of occupation governing to the best of their own interests and representing an alien power dominating subject peoples. Indians have always mistrusted Government promises and their every experience has been sadder and more bitter than the preceding one. Englishmen have never trusted Indians. Indianisation of Army has always been obstructed and we have never been trusted to have the control of our own armed forces and though now for the first time in the modern history of India the Defence Minister is an Indian the Viceroy made it perfectly clear in his broadcast that the army owed allegiance to him and to the King and not to India. This is the frame of mind of an Englishman even when the talk of transfer of power is believed to be honest and earnest. Babar's advice to his descendants was to govern through Indians. No distinction in appointments was made between the Mohammedans and Hindus or any other community. Some of the Moghul Government's most successful Governors, Viceroys and Generals were Hindus. The Imperial Army was frequently commanded by a Hindu general.

And compare this with the policy of distrust, mistrust and suspicion pursued by the British !

The British have all through behaved in a manner as if their only interest in India consisted in robbing this country of its wealth and crushing the sense of self-respect of its children under heels. It has reduced the country to a state of extreme penury and poverty. We are today the most down-trodden people in this world. Unless and until there is a thorough-going change we are doomed. The British have throughout their stay in India been the victims of superiority complex. They have an arrogance and haughtiness due to their assumption, at once false and foolish, that they are God's chosen people. They have never mixed with Indians as equals. They have never shared their woes and worries. They have never treated them as members of a race which has a bright past and a brilliant record. Once a people try to rule over another in a foreign land, it becomes overbearingly arrogant and discourteous. There are instances out of number where educated Englishmen have intentionally and wilfully insulted even ladies of this land—what to say of men who have become immune to such assaults and attacks both on bodies and feelings. No other nation even as conquerors would have treated the conquered in such a shabby and insulting manner. Coloured senators sit in the Bourbon Palaces and officers of negro race have risen to high ranks in the French Army and Navy and here in India even the most highly respected son or daughter of the soil has to live all his life in an atmosphere of inferiority and has to bend and bow in order that the exigencies of the system may be satisfied. The height to which our manhood is capable of rising can never be reached under the present system. The moral elevation which every free people feel cannot be felt by us. Our lot so far has been to be in our own land as hewers of wood and drawers of water, Mr. Joynson Hicks' notorious outburst can never be forgotton. He said, "We did not conquer India for the benefit of the natives. I know it is said at Missionary meetings that we conquered India to raise tbe level of Indians. This is cant. *We conquered India by the sword and by the sword we shall hold it.* I am not such a hypocrite as to say that we hold India for the Indians."

Lord Roberts insulted the whole of India when he said:

"It is this consciousness of the inherent superiority of the European which has won for us India. However educated and clever a native may be I believe that no rank which we can bestow on him would cause him to be considered as an equal by the British officer.



Kriplani

President, Indian National Congress

Lord Birkenhead, once the Secretary of State for India, has said :

"What man in this house can say that he can see in a generation or two generations or even in a hundred years a prospect that the people of India will be in a position to assume control of the Army, Navy and Civil Services, etc."

Every Englishman in India has this cherished conviction that he belongs to a race whom God has destined to govern and subdue, and therefore he insults Indians by his arrogance, vulgarity racial prejudice, coarseness of manners and rank discourtesy.

Gross and even brutal behaviour by Englishmen towards Indians is very frequent and it is on the increase.

An English lady who had lived in Poona for 18 years suggested that the Government should shoot Gandhi. She went on to explain that the whole trouble in India had come about because the Government won't use the iron hand to repress the political activities of Indians.

An Indian lady was to get into a first class compartment in which there were two English ladies. One of them came to the door and said haughtily, "You can't come in here". "And why"? asked the Indian. "Because you are black and I am white" said the English lady. "I prefer my colour to your manners" was the neat retort made by the Indian lady.

Some years back an Indian intellectual, a highly educated and attractive young man of slight physique entered a first class railway carriage in which were an Englishman and his wife. The Englishman threw him out on the line. He was badly bruised and injured.

The late lamented Gurudeva says in his forceful and inimitable style :—

"The demon of barbarity has given up all pretence and has emerged with unconcealed fangs ready to tear up humanity in an orgy of devastation. From one end of the world to the other the poisonous fumes of hatred darken the atmosphere. The spirit of violence which perhaps lay dormant in the psychology of the West has at last roused itself and desecrated the spirit of man.

"The wheels of fate will some day compel the English to give up the Indian Empire. But what kind of India will they leave behind? What stark miseries! When the stream of these centuries' administration runs dry at last, what a waste of mud and filth they will leave behind. I had at

one time believed that the springs of civilisation would issue out of the heart of Europe. But today when I am about to quit the world, that faith has gone bankrupt altogether.

"I look round and I see the smouldering ruins of a proud civilisation strewn like a vast heap of futility. Perhaps the dawn will come from this horizon of the East where the sun rises. A day will come when unvanquished man will realize the path of conquest despite all barriers to win back his last human heritage."

British rule, as it is carried out in India, is the lowest and most immoral system of Government in the world—the exploitation of one nation by another. Their heels are on the neck of India. They have neglected education, sanitation, medical services, housing of the poor, protection of the peasants and labourers, etc.

All this has produced bitterness which is ever-increasing and estrangement which is increasing day by day.

NEW ERA

It will be a blessed day for India when every Indian of whatever school, sect or religion he be, unites with others in the common service of his Motherland under the inspiration of nationalism, because he who is not free is not a man, he who is not free has no vision, no knowledge, no discernment, no growth, on comprehension, no will, no faith, no love—Liberty is the apple of the eye.

Our appeal is addressed to the makers of our future, shapers of our destiny and creators of a New India which will be united and free, happy and prosperous, which will have plenty to eat and enough to wear, where none will remain unlettered and not a sick man will remain unattended, poverty, ignorance, sickness and misery squalor and wretchedness will be unknown. Each man and woman will be happy and healthy. No stooping of shoulders, no bending of backs and no bowing of necks.

Self-respect will be the essential feature of our lives. British domination should go, capitalistic exploitation be finished; squeezing of blood of poor peasants is a crime, labourers and workers would enjoy the same political and civic status as their employees. Such an India will be worth living and such an India will once again remind the people that the glory we had in the past we can recapture once again. We once gave life and light to the whole world and once again shall we occupy the same position.

The objective of the Indian National Congress is an independent and united India where no class or group or majority or minority may exploit another to its own advantage and where all the elements in the nation may co-operate together for the common good and the advancement of people of India. We share with all our countrymen the joy that is being universally felt at the establishment of the Interim Government. Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru is the first Premier according to Indian estimates but Lord Wavell styles him as the Vice-President of his Government. What is there in the name ? If Lord Wavell is really a constitutional and titular head, then surely there is a real change in the administration of the country, but we have our grave doubts. Our past experience about the British strategy makes us very cautious because we know that when the English do abandon some of the outworks of their citadel, it is only that they may hold its inner treasure more securely. Their past record does not warrant a generous interpretation of this move.

This Government has not started under happy omens. Mr. Jinnah has not joined the Government. The terrible carnages in Calcutta and Bombay and stray disturbances at other places make the task of the Interim Government still more difficult.

We don't believe that there has been actually any transfer of power. It is yet a shadow, a mere shadow of what India demands.

Surely it is not what 'Quit India' resolution of August 1942 demands. Surely it is not even miles near the cherished objective of the Congress and the country, *viz.*, Purna Swaraj. It would have been better if the topmost leaders of the country had not assumed responsibility of carrying on the administration till the whole of the old autocratic, bureaucratic system had been smashed topieces. These leaders should have stepped on to throne when real and honest swaraj had been established. While we wish the Interim Government a bright success, we have not the slightest hesitation to say that this step of the Congress, taking control of the Government while the constitution of India is mainly a matter of speculation, may not prove to be the best one. We think that a grim struggle is ahead. The British can't be expected to transfer their power unless they are forced to do so. And though it is true that the present move is due to various internal and external factors working together but we believe that for the conquerors to give up their conquest, still more compelling forces will have to be brought into existence. Who can deny that this step is a momentous one but let us not forget that Britain is not entirely out of

the grip of Churchills and Amerys who during the war never missed an opportunity to din into our ears that Britain is not prepared to liquidate its Empire. Liquidation of the British Empire is inevitable. This war has considerably reduced the power, prestige, prosperity and popularity of the British nation and now the dissolution of this unnatural Empire is imminent but still India has to be very vigilant. No country wants India to be free. Even those who don't want the glory of Britain to remain as it was, don't wish India to be free. We will have to fight our battles with our own resources and with our own weapons.

We can't say whether the British will become so humane and peaceful that our non-violent methods will succeed. But a nation has an inherent right to win and preserve its freedom by all possible means. Now that India is under the charge of an Indian Defence Member he should make the Army loyal to India. There is no dividing of loyalties,—Indian Army for India. There can be no compromise on this point. We have no enmity with any nation in the world. We will have no lust for conquest and we will use our army for maintaining internal peace and saving the country from foreign aggression.

We shall watch with eagerness as to how the present Interim Government handles the situation and how the Army and the Police, the civil, technical and professional services are utilized for the betterment of our country. British Army should go. We don't need it. We never needed it. The British kept them for their purposes. Now that those purposes are gone this army should also go. No self-respecting country can afford to keep an army of occupation. We had enough of it. In India there must be only Indian Army loyal and devoted to India and to none else.

Similarly all our services should now look to India as their sole master. No intervention or interference by any other power can be tolerated. Indians alone should be recruited for India except when professional or technical superior skill is necessary in the interests of India, but this daily importing of specialists and experts should stop at once and Indians should be sent to Europe and America to acquire necessary training.

In short, the whole machinery should be overhauled, renovated and reconstructed and reconstituted and all foreign elements discarded and replaced by the Indian element. The British have emasculated the people by refusing to teach them the use of arms, have destroyed their initiative by denying them the exercise of authority, have fastened upon the country not merely a foreign

despotism but a foreign culture and have been concerned with profit-making rather than with bettering the lot of the people.

India is slowly wasting away and will inevitably perish unless she regains her right to rule herself. Our ancestors were great. Our God, our philosophy and our morality are on a higher plane of thought than the West has ever reached. Righteous self-respect and dignity of the free man revolts against foreign domination. Such a condition is inconceivable and intolerable. India's eyes have been opened. Myriads of people realize that they are men with a man's right to manage his own affairs.

Events are moving with a terrific speed in India and in England and on the world stage. The second world war is over, the atomic age has opened and the United Nations are facing the problems with an obsolete political equipment and a moral outlook that belongs to the past. Great Britain now a debtor state and the third in rank of the Powers who wield power will have to revise her old ideas. She will have to regard India as an equal power and as an independent country whose help and friendship are inestimable. She must discard every trace of the old possessive attitude and face the problems of economy and strategy with a new respect for India's personality. The omens indeed are hard to read. Some of them are deeply disturbing. We are facing the threat of hunger and it may be of famine and lacs of demobilised troops are waiting for work. This much is certain that the old order is changing, giving place to new and whatever else may happen or not, there shall no longer be a subject India—there shall no longer be a slave India.

India is determined to be free in letter and spirit, form and essence. India shall no longer tolerate foreign domination. It shall be free, fully free and thoroughly free to shape its own destiny, work out its own salvation and to join the commonwealth of world as a self-respecting country.

Sjt. Netaji says:

"I am a believer not only in economic and political freedom but in freedom in larger and wider sense, freedom from all unreasonable and unjustifiable restraints, not only economic, industrial and political but even religious and social freedom is the most ineradicable craving of human nature without which peace, contentment and happiness even manhood itself, are not possible.

"We fight not for glory nor for wealth nor for honour but for Freedom which no good man will surrender but with his life."

ONWARD TO DELHI

This was the slogan of the I.N.A. and this should be the guiding motto of every Indian, no doubt this determination has been realized to some extent. Those who till yesterday were the rebels in India and were sponsors of 'Quit India' resolution are today members of the Interim Government; but we are constrained to say that "Hanuz Dehli Dur-ast" *i.e.*, Delhi is yet far away. All that has happened so far is just a shadow of the coming events. We can acquire real power only if we repeat this pledge of Azad Hind Fauj.

"In the name of God, in the name of by-gone generations who have welded the Indian people into one nation and in the name of the dead heroes who have bequeathed to us a tradition of heroism and self-sacrifice we call upon the Indian people to rally round our banner and to strike for India's freedom. We call upon them to launch the final struggle against the British and their allies in India and to prosecute that struggle with valour and perseverance and with full faith in final victory until the enemy is expelled from the Indian soil and the Indian people are once again a free nation." We commend to our readers the following soul stirring message of Netaji:

"Comrades! You are to-day the custodians of India's national honour and embodiment of India's hopes and aspirations. So conduct yourselves that your countrymen may bless you and posterity may be proud of you. I assure you that I shall be with you in darkness and in sunshine, in sorrow and in joy, in suffering and in victory. For the present I can offer you nothing except hunger, thirst, suffering and death. It does not matter who among us will live to see India free. It is enough that India shall be free and that we shall give our all to make her free. May God now bless our Army and grant us victory in the coming fight.

"Comrades! My soldiers! Let your battle cry be 'To Delhi, To Delhi.' We shall ultimately win and our battle will not end until our surviving peoples hold the Victory Parade on another graveyard of the British Empire, the Lal Qila of Ancient Delhi."

In the preceding pages we have briefly described what India was in the ancient days and what changes took place when the Muslims invaded it and finally conquered it. We have not gone into details as that is beyond the scope of our work but we have given a connected story of India and Indians of those days. We have given a fairly detailed description of how the British by force

and fraud reduced India to the present state of servility and subjugation, poverty and penury. We have given a detailed account of the various efforts made by Indians to be free. We have traced the history of the Indian National Congress from its humble beginning to its present-day position of power and prestige. It is a faithful record of its trials and tribulations, sacrifices and service, glory and greatness, difficulties and distress, rise and fall. We are presenting this book as a souvenir on the memorable occasion of the Diamond Jubilee of the Congress, rendered all the more important because some of the topmost leaders of the Congress are to-day in charge of the portfolios of the Interim Government. This is a moment of rejoicing and yet it demands a detailed examination of the ways and means that have brought about this marvellous change and also a critical analysis of the present situation with the sole object of improving it because this goes without saying that though the door of Swaraj has been opened, we have yet to continue our efforts to capture the administration so as to make it the Government of people by the people of India and for the people of India, conducted in their interests and for their welfare.

CHAPTER I

Our India

The Motherland of Culture and Civilisation

OUR country is almost a continent. It is as large as Europe without Russia. It covers nearly two millions of square miles. It is nearly 22 times the size of British Isles and 3/5 size of the United States. From East to West it stretches for more than 2000 miles and from North to South for nearly the same distance. It is one of the neatest geographical units in the world, a unit that conveniently falls into three Divisions : 1. The great mountain wall. 2. The great lowland plains through which flow the rivers, Indus, Ganges, Brahamputra and their tributaries, 3. A great plateau.

The plains of Northern India stretching to the foot of the Himalayan wall and forming a great curve from the Arabian sea to the Bay of Bengal are one of the most important regions in the world. They are made of a deep fertile soil washed down for thousands of years by the mighty rivers. They are flat and railways can be made easily in this region. Two-third of India's population lives here.

Population.—400 millions, *i.e.* 1/5 of the population of whole earth out of which more than 26 crores are Hindus including 10 crores of Harijans and more than nine crores are Mohammedans, 63 lakhs of Christians and 57 lacs of Sikhs, *viz.*, 66% are Hindus and 24% are Moslems, 10% are others. This is distributed as Urban : 13%, Rural : 87%.

India is politically divided into two parts, British India and Indian States. Indian States cover 38.8% of the area and 23.4% of population. There are 562 States and have an aggregate revenue of 45 crores out of which 35 crores is the revenue of 23 States.

Jawahar Lal

The Jewel of the Nation



Some States are progressive but they are autocracies. In Travancore and Cochin 45% of the population is literate, 56% among males and 34% among females. Hyderabad has an annual revenue of 7 crores while there is a state in Gujerat with an area of 1.65 square miles, a population of 27 and annual revenue of Rs. 100. Freedom of the press is restricted. Many of the Princes are extravagant and waste money on their own selves, palaces, jewellery and maintenance of costly retinues.

Some States have built and are maintaining Railways of their own. Three of the States have Universities of their own. Most of the States have Colleges. There are irrigation systems and hydro-electric works on which millions of rupees have been spent. There are State or State-aided banks.

Education.—India is a very backward country in education in these times. Hardly 10% are literate and these include even those who know just to sign their names. The money spent on education is far too insufficient for our needs. The percentage of scholars who attend schools is 6% of the population. It is a deplorable fact that 97% of the women are unable to read and write. In 1911 the late Shriyut Gokhale tried to induce legislation which would permit of compulsory education being introduced but it was opposed by the Government and Gokhale's efforts were in vain.

Technical education has been entirely ignored and neglected. Individual industrialists like the great Tatas have done much in this direction but it is entirely insufficient.

Agriculture.—India is and has always been mainly an agricultural country. It is the life-blood of India. It is our great if not sole mainstay. Almost 90% of the people are in intimate touch with this industry. It gives employment to about 2/3rd of the total population of the country and 3/4th of people of India are directly engaged or dependent on agricultural pursuits. The fate of a peasant is unenviable. It is estimated that rural indebtedness exceeds 900 crores of rupees.

India is the largest sugarcane producing country. It shares with China the primacy for production of rice, and in cotton, it ranks next to U.S.A. These two countries produce 60 to 70% of the world's total, and it leads the world in the commercial production of groundnuts and occupies second position in regard to linseed. In jute and tea it possesses world's monopoly. It holds a record for its cattle production. While wheat is the most important commercial production of India, cotton is the most important commercial crop. Rice, wheat, barley, millets, maize,

pulses, vegetables, fruits, sugar, spices, coffee, tea, cotton jute oil-seeds, indigo, opium, tobacco cinchona, silk, lac, and rubber are the main produce of India. Wheat production per acre is 1/3rd of what Germany and England produce.

Industries.—There are 9,422 large Industrial Establishments and 1,940,477 workers are employed. The largest industry in India is the Cotton Textile Industry which has its home in Bombay and Ahmedabad. It is one of the eight largest industrial countries of the world.

The other industries are Jute, Iron and Steel, Tanning and Leather, Paper and Cement factories, Sugar, Woollen and Silk factories and mining coal, iron, salt, petrol, mica, magnesia and saltpetre and some of the minerals found in India.

Trades.—In volume of trade India ranks fifth in the world. But its exports are more than its imports. Before the war it exported raw materials and imported manufactured articles. Fifty per cent. of its exports are to United Kingdom and 50% of its imports are from that country.

Health.—The level of health is low, the resistance to disease is poor. Malnutrition and nutritional diseases are omnipresent. Expectation of life is 27 years, while in England it is 61 and in U.S.A. 63. The figures of maternal mortality are very high. As may as 150,000 women die annually in child-birth or from causes associated with it. Malaria causes more deaths in India than any other single disease. The number of cases is about 1,000 million a year. A high percentage of city workers suffer from Tuberculosis because of the appalling insanitary conditions and because of ignorance of laws of health and hygiene. Poverty and ignorance take a heavy toll. The great bulk of our town-dwellers are poor—terribly poor. They live huddled together in dark, dismal and foul smelling chawls or slums sleeping 4 or 5 or even 10 in a small, dark smoky room, eating of the barest food, nearly naked and half-starved, their children without any education. Their lot is dreadful. In labour quarters, they live in conditions of extreme squalor and filth. Quite a majority of them are pathetic examples of malnutrition which is really the root cause of the low physical vitality of the average Indian. An ordinary peasant in our country with a wife and three children has to live on much less than Rs. 27 per mensem. Such are the starvation and the filth and the wretched homes in which are babies born that they die like flies. Infant mortality is appalling: 167 per thousand die at the age of one year and in 5 years half of the children are dead. Our mortality rates are 22.2 per thousand while in other countries it is much less. The average income

of an Indian is Rs. 20 to 100 per annum. The cost of living has gone very high and the income has not proportionately increased.

Political Parties in India.—In addition to the premier political organisation, the Indian National Congress, the following are the other political organisations working in India :

(1) Congress Socialist Party. (2) All-India Muslim League. (3) All-India Azad Muslim Conference. (4) Radical Democratic Party. (5) Ahrar Party. (6) Communist Party. (7) All-Indian Hindu Mahasabha. (8) Jamiat-ul-Ulema-e-Hind. (9) Khudai Khidmatgars. (10) Liberal Party. (11) Shia Political Conference. (12) Momin Ansar Conference. (13) Khaksar Party. (14) Unionist Party of the Punjab. (15) Proja Party of Bengal. (16) Justice Party of Madras. (17) Trade Union. (18) India Labour Federation. (19) All-India Kisan Sabha. (20) All-India Village Industries Association. (21) All-India Harijan Sewak Sangha. (22) All-India Spinners' Association. (23) Kasturba Memorial Society, and many others.

Dialects.—There are above 225 dialects in India. The most wide-spread language is Hindustani a composite term used to describe the Hindi and Urdu languages as spoken by about 150 millions of people.

People of India.—There is a variety of human types in India. There are blended many racial streams : Indian, Aryan, Mongol, Turkish, Persian.

Distinct racial types, are : Sindhis, Punjabis, Bengalis, Tamilians, Andhras, Malayalese, Pathans, Sikhs, Marathas, Jats, Dogras. Many people tend to think of the Indian population in religious terms as Hindus, Moslems, Sikhs, Christians, Parsees, etc. but this is not a correct approach. A wide variety in its physical feature is found in the people in India. He can be as fair as the blondes of Nordics. He can be as dark as the African Negro. He can be the tallest, he can be short and square. He can be stalwart and strong. He can be frail and rickety.

India is placed on shipping and trade routes from Europe and the Near East to the Far East and to Australasia. It can trade with equal ease with China, Japan, Thailand, Malaya, East and South Africa, with Australia and New Zealand, Levant, Europe, with Russia, Iran and Afghanistan.

India has every variety of climate from the blazing heat of the plains as hot in places as hottest Africa—Jacobabad in Sind can be as much as 125 degrees in the shade and down below freezing

point to the Asiatic cold of the Himalayan region. It is controlled by two seasonal winds or monsoons. The rain is not evenly distributed for the monsoon sheds little rain when it races over hot flat plains but pours down in torrents when it is checked by mountains. Sind gets only few inches a year while Bombay gets more than 60 inches. Cherrapunjee has 460 inches of rain in one year.

Of its people it can be said without fear of boasting that they are not inferior in intelligence to any other race and that they have a glorious civilisation and ancient culture behind them. Indians have always held their own very well when put to work alongside people of other races. Indians have proved themselves as efficient at work as any nation on the surface of the earth.

India is not a new conception. It was known to ancient writers. Its physical features are sufficiently distinct to separate it from the surrounding territories and have been determinative of the physique, outlook, life and culture of the inhabitants.

One of the most wonderful phenomena in the history of the human race is the tenacity and resilence with which India and her culture has persisted through ages older than Egypt, much older than Greece and Rome. She still lives. The excavations at Mohenjo Daro have opened a new vista. Her life is unbroken, her culture undiminished. Her message is as inspiring to-day as it was centuries ago. This immortality India owes to the unbroken chain of great masters whom India has produced age after age. They have given her fresh youth, fresh inspiration, renewed life and power. They gave Dharma to India, the sum total of all sentiments, beliefs, values, ideals, activities which made India loved by one and all. Aryan culture has been built upon India, on the thoughts, ideals and efforts of such prophets and great souls.

India has been blessed by Nature with a huge area, with a hospitable and varied climate, with fertile soil and plenty of water, with net deposits of valuable minerals below the ground and thick forests above it with a large stock of cattle, and above all, with a population consisting of a fifth of human race which is not inferior to any other race in intelligence and other qualities and which has a great civilisation and an ancient culture behind it.

India is a paradox,—poverty in the land of plenty. Extreme poverty and low standard of living of the mass of people—with this goes a curious contentment. National conscience and national

patriotism have not been aroused to the necessary standard. The average Indian farmer is a fine fellow, industrious, sober and pious and of a high order of intelligence even though usually illiterate but he is poor and poverty-stricken.

Various communities in India will make the necessary effort to live together in peace only when they realize that the British people and its Government are fully bent on making British rule everlasting over this country. The excuse of Hindu-Moslem dissension is false and frivolous. History and geography had willed it that these two creeds must live together. Separation invites a threat to India's security and prosperity, nor is it an expedient that promises communal peace. Any proposal to cut up India into parts is a painful one to contemplate. It goes against all those deeply felt sentiments and convictions that affect people so powerfully. A partition will in effect add to the difficulties and increase the very problems—political, social and economic which it intends to solve. To think of partitioning India goes against the whole current of modern economic and historical development. It seems to be fantastic in the extreme. It encourages fissiparous tendencies and opens the door to the possibility of an indefinite number of partitions.

The civilisation of India is among the most ancient in the world, and in very early times, attained a height and fullness of development hardly reached and not excelled by any nation under similar circumstances. Her arts and literature, sciences and medicine, mathematics and astronomy, philosophy and metaphysics flourished and social and political sciences had also made great progress.

The trade of India too was extensive and her industries prospered according to the standards of the times. The influence of the Indian civilisation was not confined to this country but spread far beyond her borders to large parts of Asia and certain parts of Europe. For too long has the process of evolution of a common culture for the world been held in abeyance as India has been held for making her contribution thereto. A free India will be a great and powerful asset to the culture, the civilisation and the wealth of humanity.

Centuries before the Saxon races were living in caves and forests tattooing the bodies, eating raw animal flesh, wearing animal skins—in that remote antiquity the dawn of time, civilisation broke upon the horizon of India or Bharat Varsha. The ancient Vedic sages had already perfected their lofty systems of moral philosophy and the Aryans were well-established in the

practice of the ethical and spiritual teachings of the Vedas. India has always been the fountain-head of every system of philosophy and the home of all the religious thought of the world. There is no other country in the world where from pre-historic times down to the present day philosophy and religion have played so important a part in forming the character of the nation as they have done in India. The dawn of Aryan civilisation broke for the first time on the horizon of India which may be called the motherland of metaphysics, philosophy, logic, astronomy, science, art, music and medicine as well as of truly ethical religion. No nation could stand as their rival or compete with them in any of the branches of their civilisation.

From very ancient times the Hindus as a nation have practised the sublime ethical precept of non-resistance of evil, the grand moral doctrine of returning good for evil.

In India religion has been the source of philosophy, science, art, music, everything. From it they have gained their education and culture. It is therefore a vital thing with them.

CHAPTER II

Ancient India

India contains the whole history of philosophy in a nutshell.

A complete revoultion of the nodes and aspides which Aryans believe to be performed in 4,320,000,000 years forms a Kalpa or Day of Brahma. In this are included 14 manwantras or periods, each of which is composed of seventy-one Mahayugas or Great Ages and each Mahayuga contains 4 Yugas or Ages of unequal length The first or Satyayuga extends through 1,728,000 years. The second or Tretayuga runs through 1,296,000 years and the third Dwapar through 8,84,000 years, and the last Kaliyuga in which we are living at present of which 5000 years have elapsed so far.

THE ARYANS

Vedas.—The Vedas are the revealed scriptures of the Aryans. They are not made, they are eternal. On the banks of the rivers of the Punjab the great sages and seers (Rishis) taught these hymns to their disciples. They are the oldest books in the library of man. They are the bed-rock of Aryan civilisation. They contain the germs of the whole after-development of Indian religion and culture. There are four Vedas—Rig, Yajur, Sam, and Atharva. Each Veda has another portion called Brahmana. These are the earliest authority for social and religious institutions of India.

The Aryans, a tall, fair-complexioned and handsome people established in India, gave it a name, a religion and civilisation. Their culture, manners and customs have made a permanent mark on the whole country. This is the most important event in the early history of India. Indian tradition believes the Aryans to be

the natives of India. It is believed that they lived in the beautiful valleys of the Saptasindhu. The popularly accepted view gives the Aryans a home somewhere in Central Asia. From this place they are believed to have spread out into India, Persia and Europe.

They might have entered India sometime between 2,500 B.C. to 1,500 B.C.

The present-day Indian civilisation is in its broad features Aryan. It is visible in languages, philosophy, religion, tradition, social structure and administrative system that gives a unity to the myriad shaped life of India. Some of the features of this civilisation are: lofty spirituality, love of order evident in a scientific spirit, systematic knowledge and detailed analysis, an intellectual check upon emotions and passions as witnessed in Indian art and literature, morals and social customs, respect for women. India is a land of the most ancient culture and civilisation.

It is really very unfortunate that true ond authentic historical records of the early Aryans are not available. They reach the highest pinnacle of civilisation but it is a matter of extreme regret that faithful chronicles of those days are not before us. Fable and fiction have been so much interspersed with real history that it becomes well-nigh impossible to winnow the chaff from the grain. It is on this land that the Vedas were revealed and from here emanates the light for humanity.

A view of the religion of the Aryans is given and some light is thrown on their attainments in science and philosophy by the Vedas—a collection of ancient hymns and prayers believed to be a Divine revelation to the holy Rishis. The first complete picture of the state of society is afforded by the code of laws which is called Manu Smriti. It is the work of a learned man designed to set forth an idea of a perfect commonwealth under the Aryan institutions.

It has a great historical value. It gives a fairly adequate idea of the spirit and character of Hindu Society. It is regarded as a standard work on Hindu Law.

The most important feature of this society is the division into 4 classes or castes: Brahmans (Sacredotal), Kashtriyas (Military), the Vaishyas, (Traders and Industrious) and the Sudras, (Servant class).

Brahmans are to be treated with more respect than a King. The life prescribed to them is one of laborious study and of austerity and retirement. The most honourable of their work was

regarded as teaching. A Brahman must, in no extremity, enter into service and must refrain from all worldly honour and avoid all wealth that may interfere with hisd uties.

The Military class (Kashtriyas) is treated with honour but it is not equal to Brahman's. The prosperity of both in this world and the next depends on their cordial union.

The duties of Kashtriyas are to defend the people, to give alms, to perform Yajnas (Sacrifices) and to read the Vedas. The Vaishyas are to keep herds of cattle, carry on trade, lend at interest and cultivate the land.

The duty of a Sudra is to serve the other classes. They were not slaves. They were free to choose their jobs and to per form Yajnas. They could practise mechanic trades.

The life of a man was divided into 4 quarters.

1st Quarter.—He must spend as a student. He leads a life of abstinence and humility.

2nd Quarter.—He lives with his wife and family and discharges the duties of his caste.

3rd Quarter.—He must spend as an anchorite in the woods

4th Quarter.—He lives as a Sanyasin. He is now released from all forms of external observance and his business is contemplation. His mortification ceases. He is to cultivate equanimity and to enjoy delight in meditation on the Divinity, till at last he quits the body as a bird leaves the branch of tree at its pleasure.

The laws of war were honourable and very humane. Poisoned and mischievously barbed arrows and fire arrows were all prohibited. There were many situations in which it is by no means allowable to destroy the enemy. Among those who must always be spared are unarmed or wounded men and those who had broken their weapons and one who asked for his life and one who says 'I am thy captive.' Other prohibitions were still more generous—a man on horseback or in a chariot was not to kill one on foot, nor was it allowed to kill one who sat down fatigued or who slept or who fled or who was fighting with another man. Compare these rules and prohibitions with the practice of the present-day warfare and the methods odopted by the civilised nations of today!

UPANISHADS

The Upanishads show a very high development in the thought of the ancient Hindus. The spirit of Vedic religion is the disinterested pursuit of truth. It is comprehensive, synthetic and

seeks unity in a common quest for truth. It is a way of life and it insists on a spiritual and ethical outlook on life. It is a fellowship of all who accept the law of right and earnestly seek for the truth.

It has its basis on the philosophy of Vedanta and Upanishads. It has a practical purpose to regenerate the soul, to make it see the truth. We can know the truth only to the extent we have lived it. No one is a philosopher whose teaching is not reflected in his life. When the Upanishadas claim that spiritual freedom is attained through Gyan (Gnosis) they mean not mere intellect but a vital function of the spirit. Philosophy as the pursuit of wisdom is a guide to right-thinking and right living. It is a study of the self. It is the science of the self (Atam Vidya). Jnana is not conceptual reasoning or metaphysical perspicacity, but is illumined being direct and immediate conciousness of reality.

We have to discipline the mind and prevent psychological prejudices and obstacles from interfering with the direct perception of the truth. We must purify the vision from the contamination of our desires, see all things as they are, parts of objective existence. The renunciation must be entire and the spirit must become pure. The discipline is austere. The Upanishad says, "The self is realised by truth, by austerity, by proper knowledge, by uninterrupted self-control." Inside the body is the self full of light and pure and it is perceived by persons of self control whose imperfections are destroyed says Bhagwad Gita. In the Bhagwad Gita Lord Krishna is portrayed as an active gracious God who attends to the needs of men and demands from them the response of love. He says, "Abandoning every duty come to me alone for refuge I will release thee from all sins, sorrow not."

The Ramayana and Mahabharata are the two epics of the Indian History. Both these epics refer to the social and political conditions of the Aryan people when they had been living here. The great heroic poem Ramayana is a record of the life-history of Bhagwan Rama. It is believed to be the first book in verse. It has beautiful passages which show the excellence of the culture and civilisation of that period. It is regarded as more ancient than the Mahabharata. It is a useful record of the Aryan political history, civilisation and religion. It wields a great influence on the Hindu mind.

The other epic of great importance is Mahabharata of Vyasa. It has 100,000 verses and gives a very detailed account of the state of the Aryan society in those days. That it is being translated into

Russian language shows the high esteem in which it is held even by foreigners.

BHAGWAD GITA

Of the philosophic portion of Mahabharata the important one is the Bhagwad Gita, the Divine Song. It preaches the doctrine of duty and action without any selfish motive. This book has been the solace of one and all. It is the most widely read book and has been translated into almost all the languages of the world.

One of the most astounding facts is the vitality of the Aryan civilisation which has outlived the shocks of ages. The ideas of the Vedic period are a vital force in India and have influenced the thought, religion, philosophy, literature, art and science of the whole world.

Kautalya (Chanakya) the Brahman minister of Chandragupta gives us an interesting picture of Indian political conditions in the reign of Chandragupta who has been one of the most important monarchs of India. In this period she became the cultural fountain of the world sending out her missionaries to spread Indian civilisation and religion outside her frontiers. On the political side, she rose to be a great political power in and outside India.

BUDDHIST PERIOD

There are two other religions which although distinct from that of the Vedas appear to belong to the same stock and which seem to have shared with it in the veneration of the people of India These are the religions of the Buddha and Jains.

Both these resemble the Brahman doctrines in their character of Ahimsa and in the belief of repeated transmigrations, and various hells for the purification of the wicked and heavens for the solace of the good. The great object of all the three is the ultimate Moksha.

All the nations professing the religion of Buddha concur in referring its origin to India. Its founder was Sakyamuni, and Gautama, a resident of Kapilvastu, north of Gorakhpur. He was a Khashtriya and he belonged to the Solar race. He was born by the middle of 6th B.C.

The Buddhist theology, mythology, philosophy, geography, chronology, etc., are almost entirely of Vedic origin and all the terms used in their sciences are Sanskrit. We have no precise

information regarding the early progress of this religion. It was triumphant in Hindustan in the reign of Asoka. It was introduced by his missionaries into Ceylon. The Buddhist sacred books known as Tripatakas are a very fruitful source of historical information. Their value is great from the point of view of art and literature and thus their importance is very considerable.

The most ancient of the Buddhist sect entirely denies the being of God and some of those which admit the existence of God refuse to acknowledge Him as the Creator or Ruler of the Universe.

The highest rank in the scale of existence is held by certain beings called Bodhisattavas who have raised themselves by their own actions and austerities during a long series of transmigration in this and former worlds, to the state of perfect bliss which is regarded as the great objects of desire.

The Buddhists differ in many other respects from the Brahmans. They deny the authority of the Vedas and Puranas, and they have no caste. They live in monastries, wear a uniform of yellow dress, go with their feet bare and with heads and beards shaven.

Asoka, a prince, celebrated among the Buddhists was one of the most zealous disciples and promoters of this religion. History records the names of very few kings who were as great as Asoka. Amidst the tens and thousands of names of monarchs that crowd the columns of history, the name of Asoka shines and shines alone like a star. From Volga to Japan his name is still honoured. He is without a parallel in history. He was really in possession of a commanding influence over the States to the north of the Nerbudda. The extent of his dominions appears from the remote points at which his edict-columns are erected and the same monuments bear testimony to the civilised character of his government since they contain orders for establishing hospitals and dispensaries throughout his Empire as well as for planting trees and digging wells along the public highways. This ascendancy of Asoka is a proof that the Kings of Magadha were Emperors and Lords Paramount of India. They brought the whole earth under one umbrella.

THE JAINS

The Jains hold an intermediate place between the followers of the Buddha and the Brahmanas. They agree with the Buddhists in denying the existence or at least the activity and prominence of God, in believing the eternity of matter, in the worship of deified saints, in their scrupulous care of animal life, in their having no

hereditary priesthood, in disclaiming the divine authority of the Vedas and in having no sacrifice and no respect for fire. The chief objects of their worship are a limited number of saints who have raised themselves by austerities to a superiority over the Gods and who exactly resemble those of the Buddhists in appearance and general character.

The Jain temples are generally very large and handsome, sometimes resembling Hindu temples. By far the finest specimen of Jain temples of the Hindu form are the noble remains in white marble on the mountain of Abu to the north of Gujerat. There are Jain caves also on a great scale at Ellora, Nasik and other places and there is near Chinraipatam in the Mysore a statue of one of the Tirathankaras, cut out of a rock which has a height of 54 to 70 ft.

The Jains appear to have originated in the 6th or 7th century to have become conspicuous in the 8th or 9th century, and attained the highest prosperity in the 11th and declined after the 12th. Their principal seats seem to have been in southern parts of the peninsula. They appear to have undergone several persecutions by the Brahmans. The Jain sacred books known as 12 Angas contain a number of historical allusions about the times of Mahavira.

Six Schools of Hindu Philosophy

There are six ancient schools of philosophy recognised among the Hindus :—

1. Purna Mimansa.
2. Uttar Mimansa or Vedanta.
3. Nyaya or Logical system of Gautama.
4. The Vaisheshaks or Atomic school of Kanad.
5. The Sankhya school of Kapila.
6. The Yoga of Patanjli.

All the Indian systems of philosophy agree in their objective, *viz.*, to teach the means of obtaining Mokhsha or in other words exemption from metempsychosis and deliverance from all corporal encumbrances. The Aryans have been the teachers of philosophy rather than learners.

The Aryans are distinguished in Astronomy, Geometry and Arithmetic. They are the inventors of decimal notations. In Algebra they have most excelled their contemporaries and to them belongs the credit of bringing the science into perfection which happened long before it was known to the Arabians.

The earliest medical writers extant are Charaka and Susrata. Their works were translated into Arabic, and Arab writers openly acknowledge their obligations to the medical writers of India. Their acquaintance with medicine has been very extensive. Their surgery is as remarkable as their medicine.

The Sanskrit language has been pronounced to be of wonderful structure. It is more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin and more exquisitely refined than either. Panini, the earliest extant writer on Grammar, has established a system of grammar the most complete that was ever employed in arranging the elements of human speech.

Of the Indian manufactures the most remarkble is that of cotton cloth, the beauty and delicacy of which was so long admired and which in fineness of texture has never yet been approached in any other country. The brilliancy and permanency of many of their dyes has not yet been equalled in Europe.

The moral tone of Indian society was very high. The people lived simple and happy lives, which were long and free from diseases. They were reputed for their probity, honesty and integrity. Their social and personal morality was of the finest type. They left their houses unguarded and unlocked. They were truthful and brave and were never convicted of lying. They needed no witnesses in their transactions nor were seals or contracts in use. There was complete mutual faith and people never resorted no law courts. The people in those days lived in peace and prosperity. People showed excellent and fine taste in the matter of art and dress and jewellery.

Adultration of grains, oils, alkalies, salts, scents and medicines was punished. Good sanitary arrangements were made in big and crowded cities. No one could throw dirt or cause mire in the streets or roads.

Azad

The Nation's Pilot



CHAPTER III

The Mohammedan Period

THE first appearance of the Mohammedans in India was in the year of the Hijra 44 at the time of their first expedition to Kabul. Mohalib was detached from the invading army and penetrated to Multan from whence he brought back many prisoners. It is probable that his object was only to explore the intermediate country and that his report was not encouraging. No further attempt was made on the north of India during the continuance of the Arab Rule. The next invasion was of a permanant nature. It was carried on from the south of Persia into the country at the mouth of Indus then subject to a Hindu Prince whose capital was at Alor near Bhakkar. Arab descents on Sind by sea are mentioned as early as the Caliphate of Omar but they were probably piratical expeditions. They produced no permanent results. At last in the reign of CaliphWahid a more strenuous attack was made. An Arab ship was siezed at Dewal, a sea-port connected with Sind. Raja Dahir was called on for restitution. He refused. The Mussalmans sent a body of 1,000 infantry and 300 horses to enforce their demand. This detachment perished like its predecessors. Hajjaj, the Governor of Basra, prepared a regular army of 6,000 men at Shiraz and gave the command of it to his own nephew Mohd. Qasim a youngman of 20. In 712 A.D. he conducted the army in safety to the walls of Dewal. He commenced his operations by an attack on a temple which was occupied in addition to the numerous Brahman inhabitants by a strong garrison of Rajputs. Qasim was informed that the safety of the place was believed to depend on the flag which was displayed on the tower of the temple. He directed his engines against that sacred standard and at last succeeded in bringing it to the ground which occasioned so much dismay in the garrison as to cause the speedy fall of the place. Qasim ordered

all above the age of 17 to be put to death and all under it with the women to be reduced to slavery. The fall of the temple led to the fall of the town. The son of Dahir retreated to another place but he was pursued and made to surrender.

Qasim's progress was easy but later on he was confronted with a powerful army and he was constrained to wait for reinforcements and a renewal of his equipments. He was joined in time by 2,000 horses from Persia and he advanced to the neighbour of Alor. There the Raja advanced to defend his capital with 50,000 men. Qasim being impressed with the dangers of the situation from the disproportion of his numbers and the impossibility of retreat in case of failure, availed himself of the advantage of the ground and awaited the attack of Hindus. During the heat of the attack which was made on him, a fire ball struck the Raja's elephant and the terrified animal took the master off the field and could not be stopped until it had plunged into the neighbouring river. Dahir mounted his horse and renewed the battle with courage and fell fighting gallantly in the midst of the Arabian cavalry. The Raja's daughter-in-law collected the remains of the routed army, put the city into a posture of defence and maintained it against the attacks of the enemy. But she could not hold out for long. Her resolution did not desert her and the Rajput garrison inflamed by her example determined to devote themselves along with her after the manner of their tribe. The women and children were sacrificed in the flames of their kindling. The men with due ceremonies took leave of each other and of the world, the gates were thrown open, the Rajputs rushed out sword in hand and throwing themselves on the weapons of their enemies resisted to a man. The city was carried by assault and all the men in arms were slaughtered in the storm. Their families were reduced to bondage.

One more desperate stand was made at Ashcaundra after which Multan seems to have fallen without resistance and the Mohammedans pursued their success unopposed until they had occupied every part of the domains of Raja Dahir.

On the first invasion each city was called on, as the army approached, to embrace the Mohammedan religion or to pay tribute. In case of refusal the city was attacked, all the fighting men were put to death and their families were sold as slaves.

In the towns that were stormed, the temples had been razed to ground, the religious worship had been forbidden and the land and stipends of the Brahmans had been appropriated for the use of the State. To reverse these acts when once performed, seemed a more direct concession to idolatry and Qasim referred the matter

to Arabia. The reply that came from that place was that as they had paid tribute they were entitled to all the privileges of subjects and that they should be allowed to rebuild their temples and perform their rites, and that the land and money of the Brahmans should be restored.

Among the numerous female captives in Sind were two daughters of Raja Dahir who from their rank and personal charms were thought worthy of being presented to the Commander of the Faithful. They were, accordingly, sent to the Court and introduced into the harem. When the eldest was brought into the presence of the Caliph, she burst into a flood of tears and exclaimed that she was now unworthy of his notice, having been dishonoured by Qasim. The Caliph sent orders that Qasim should be sewed in a raw hide and sent in that condition to Damascus. When his orders were executed he produced the body before the princess who was overjoyed at the sight and exultingly declared to the astonished Caliph that Qasim was innocent but that she had now revenged the death of her father and the ruins of her family.

The advance of the Mohammedan army ceased with the life of Qasim and the Mussalmans were expelled by the Rajput tribe of Sumera and all their Indian conquests restored to Hindus who retained possession for nearly 500 years. Although the proverbial riches of India seemed to invite the invader, the Mohammedans due to the resistance offered by the Hindus could not carry out their plans and projects and thus the eastern conquests of the Arabs ceased.

HOUSE OF GHAZNI

The undiscovered regions of India presented a wider field for romantic enterprise of Sultan Mahmud. The great extent of this favoured country, the rumours of its accumulated treasures, the fertility of the soil, and the peculiarity of its production raised it into a land of fable in which the surrounding nations might indulge their imagination without control.

Mahmud proceeded on his first invasion of India. He left Ghazni with 10,000 chosen horse and was met by Jaipal of Lahore in the neighbourhood of Peshawar. He totally defeated him and took him prisoner and pursued his march to Bhatinda. He stormed and plundered that place and then returned with rich spoils of the country to Ghazni.

Jaipal on returning from his captivity and worn out by repeated disasters made over the crown to his son Anangpal and

mounting a pyre which he had ordered to be constructed set it on fire with his own hands and perished in the flames.

Mahmud's next expedition was to reduce his dependent the Afghan Chief of Multan, who had formed a close alliance with Anangpal. The armies met somewhere near Peshawar when the Raja was routed and compelled to take refuge in Kashmir.

Mahmud then laid siege to Multan, and at the end of seven days accepted the submission of the Chief and returned to Ghazni.

Mahmud set out in the spring of 1008 A.D. to resume his operetions against Anangpal who had sent ambassadors to Hindu princes and uniting their forces had advanced into the Punjab with the largest army that had ever yet taken the field. Mahmud was alarmed at this unexpected display of force. He took the defensive. The Hindu women sold their jewels, melted down their golden ornaments and sent their contributions to furnish resources for the holy war. Mahmud was repulsed by the Hindus but in the end Mahmud took advantage of the confusion that prevailed among the Hindus because their general had fled from the field.

Mahmud then allowed the Indians no time to reassemble. He followed them into the Punjab and directed his attack against Nagarkot, a fortified temple on a mountain. It was a depository of most of the wealth of the neighbourhood and it contained a greater quantity of gold, silver, precious stones and pearls than ever was collected in the royal treasury of any prince on earth.

700,000 golden dinars, 700 maunds of gold and silver plates, 200 maunds of pure gold ingots, 200 maunds of unwrought silver and 20 maunds of various jewels including pearls, corals, diamonds and rubies collected, since Raja Bhima in the Hinduh eroic ages, are said to have fallen at once in his hands.

After a few small expeditions, he undertook his expedition to Somnath which was a temple of great sanctity, situated near the southern extremity of Gujerat. It was the richest, the most frequented as well as the most famous place of worship in the country. On his way he ravaged Ajmer and at length reached Somnath, the great object of his exertions. Mahmud attacked the temple but the Rajputs made a gallant defence and the Mohammendans were driven off the place with loss. For three days the princes fought very valiantly and compelled Mahmud to relinquish his attack. Mahmud leaped upon his horse and cheered his troops with such energy that they killed 5,000 Hindus after the charge. Mahmud entered the temple and was struck with the garndeur

of the edifice, the lofty roof of which was supported by 56 pillars curiously carved and richly ornamented with precious stones. The idol was five yards high of which two were buried in the ground. Mahmud instantly ordered the image to be destroyed. When the Brahmans of the temple threw themselves before him and offered an enormous ransom if he would spare their deity, Mahmud struck the image with his mace and the image burst and poured forth a quantity of diamonds and other jewels that had been deposited in it. Two pieces of this idol were sent to Mecca and Medina. The treasure taken on this occasion exceeded all former captures. It is impossible to enumerate the maunds of gold and jewels that Mahmud took to Ghazni. Mahmud returned to Multan before the end of the year. This was the last of Mahmud's expeditions to India. He died at Ghazni on the 29th April, 1030. Shortly before his death he commanded all the most costly of his treasures to be displayed before him and after long contemplation before them he is said to have shed tears at the thought that he was soon to lose them. It is remarked that after his fond parting with his treasures, he distributed no portion of them among those around him.

Mahmud requested Firdausi to write a historical poem embodying the achievements of the Persian Kings and heroes previous to the Mohammedan conquest. He completed the great work. It is still the most popular of all books among Persians. A remarkable feature of this poem is the studious rejection of Arabic. It is said, though perhaps not quite correctly, that not one exclusively Arabic word is to be found in the 60,000 couplets. When the whole was completed in 30 years the reward offered by Mahmud was entirely disproportionate to the greatness of the work. Firdausi rejected what was offered, withdrew in indignation to his home, launched a bitter satire at Mahmud, and held himself prepared to fly from that monarch's dominions. Mahmud forgot the satire and sent so ample a remuneration to the poet as would have surpassed his highest expectations. But his bounty came too late and the treasure entered one door of Firdausi's house as his bier was taken out of the other.

A caravan was cut off in the desert to the east of that country and the mother of one of the merchants who was killed, went to Ghazni to complain. Mahmud urged the impossibility of keepcaning order in so remote a part of his territories when the women boldly answered, "Why then do you take countries which you cannot govern and for the protection of which you must answer on the day of judgment?" Mahmud was struck with the reproach

and after satisfying the woman by a liberal present he took effective measures for the protection of the caravans. Mohammed was put in possession of his father's (Sultan Mahmud's) throne as soon as Mahmud died but his brother Masud revolted against him. Mohammed was captured, blinded and sent into confinement and Masud ascended the throne within four months after his father's death.

Shahab-ud-din Ghori's attention was for a long time almost entirely turned to India. He began his expeditions in 1176 A.D. when he took Uchcha, the junction of the rivers of Punjab with the Indus. Two years afterwards he led an expedition to Gujerat in which he was defeated and compelled to retreat with many disasters. His next expedition was to Sind which he overran to the seashore.

His first attack was on Prithvi Raj, king of Ajmer and Delhi. The rout was complete. The Mussalmans were pursued for 40 miles and Shahab-ud-din returned to the other side of India. This disgrace always rankled in his bosom and he never slumbered in ease or waked but in sorrow and anxiety. He recruited an army and began his march towards India.

Prithvi Raj again met him with a vast army. He sent a message to Shahab-ud-din to deter him from advancing. Shahab-ud-din gave orders for a retreat and the Hindu forces were drawn out of their ranks, but as soon as he saw them in disorder, he charged them at the head of 12,000 chosen horse in steel armour, and this prodigious army once shaken like a great building, tottered to its fall and was lost in its own ruins. The Viceroy of Delhi and many other chiefs were slain on the field and Prithvi Raj being taken in the pursuit, was put to death in cold blood.

Shahab-ud-din was more sanguinary than Mahmud. When took Ajmer soon after this battle, he put some thousands of the inhabitants who opposed him to the sword reserving the rest for slavery.

He put Qutb-ud-din Eibak in charge of the Indian affairs who he mounted the throne afterwards as his representative in India. Next year Shahab-ud-din returned to India, defeated Jai Chandra, the Rathor Raja of Qanauj in a battle on the Jumna, north of Etawah and took Qanauj and Benares. The Afghan line was replaced by the Moghuls after it ruled for about three centuries.

BABAR

Daulat Khan Lodi revolted and called in the aid of Babar who had for sometime reigned in Kabul. Babar had once invaded

the Punjab previously and he now gladly availed himself of this invitation. Babar defeated the Afghan Chiefs who opposed him in the field. Lahore was reduced to ashes by the victors.

At Panipat he found himself in the neighbourhood of Ibrahim Lodi who had come out to meet him at the head of an army amounting as it was reported to Babar, of 100,000 men with 1,000 elephants. Ibrahim was killed and the Indian army having been nearly surrounded during the battle, suffered heavy loss in the defeat. Babar reviews his own conquest with much complacency. His enterprise was memorable in its effects. Babar's conduct in the places where he met with resistance was as inhuman as that of Tamarlene. Babar was the founder of a line of kings under whom India rose to the highest pitch of prosperity.

Babar's end came under strange circumstances. When it was announced to him that physicians had given up all their efforts declaring that medicine could no longer be of any avail to Humayun who was suffering from a dangerous illness, Babar seized the only hope that remained and he determined to devote his own life for that of his son. Babar's resolution was unmoved. He walked three times round the bed of the dying prince and then spent some moments in earnest prayer to God at the end of which he was filled with such assurance that he more than once exclaimed, "I have borne it away." And so powerful was the impression both on his mind and his son's that Humayun began to recover and Babar's health began visibly to decline. He called his sons and ministers and explained his dying wishes and enjoined concord among all and affection among his children.

His memoirs are almost singular in their own nature and perfectly so, if we consider the circumstances of the writer. The style is plain and manly as well as lively and picturesque and it is the work of a man of genius and observation.

HUMAYUN

Humayun succeeded his father Babar. He had many viccissitudes of life and never had a peaceful time.

He was not deficient in intelligence but had little energy and although free from vices and violent passions, he was not highly principled. He was more inclined to ease than ambition.

At Amarkot he found a friend Vir Rana Prasad who not only received him with respect and hospitality but offered his assistance. It was this period of depression and affliction that gave birth to Akbar, a prince destined to raise the Indian Empire

to the greatest lustre (Oct. 14, 1542). Humayun reigned for 26 years, out of which he spent 16 years in banishment. His unsettled reign left little time for internal improvement. He met with an accident which occasioned his almost immediate death.

AKBAR

Akbar was only 13 years and 4 months old at his father's death. He had been sent by Humayun as the nominal head of the army in the Punjab, but the command was vested in Bairam Khan. In the first years of Akbar's reign his territory was confined to the Punjab and the country round Delhi and Agra. In the third year he acquired Ajmer without a battle, early in the fourth he obtained the fort of Gwalior and not long before Bairam's fall he had driven the Afghans out of Lucknow and the country on the Ganges as far east as Jaunpur.

Akbar was a strongly built and handsome man with an agreeable expression of countenance and very captivating manners. He was endowed with great personal strength and activity. He was of very clean habits and was sober and abstemious. He was always satisfied with very little sleep and frequently spent whole nights in those philosophical discussions of which he was so fond. Although so constantly engaged in wars and although he made greater improvements in the civil government than any other king of India, yet by his judicious distribution of time and by his talents for the despatch of business he always enjoyed abundant leisure for study and enjoyment. He rode for 220 miles in two successive days and could walk 30 or 40 miles in a day. His history is filled with instances of romantic courage and he seems to have been stimulated by a sort of instinctive love of danger.

Akbar's tolerant spirit was displayed early in his reign. He made open profession of his latitudinarian opinions. Abul Fazl and Faizi who were the sons of a learned sufi (Mubarik) influenced Akbar's opinions. Faizi was the first Mussalman who applied himself to a diligent study of Hindu literature and science. He conducted a systematic enquiry into every branch of knowledge of the Brahmans. He translated Sanskrit works in poetry, Bija Ganita and Lilawati of Bhaskaracharya, best Hindu books on Algebra and Arithmetic. He likewise superintended translations made by learned men, of the Vedas, Mahabharata and Ramayana.

Akbar prevailed on a Christian priest who was learned in science and history to come from Goa and to educate few youths, to translate Greek literature into Persian. Faizi was directed to make a correct version of Evangelists. Abul Fazl and Faizi soon

became the intimate friends and inseparable companions of the sovereign. They were consulted and employed in the most important affairs of the government. Along with these there were many other learned men of all religions about the Court and it was the delight of Akbar to assemble them and sit for whole nights assisting at their philosophical discussions.

Akbar always proclaimed that God can only be adequately worshipped by following reason and not yielding implicit faith to any alleged revelation. He maintained that we ought to revere God according to the knowledge of Him derived from our own reason by which His unity and benevolence are sufficiently established; that we ought to serve Him and seek for our future happiness by subduing our bad passions and practising such virtues as are beneficial to mankind. He had no priests and no places of public worship. His fundamental doctrine was that there were no prophets. His appeal on all occasions was to human reason.

In the 7th year of his reign he abolished the Jazya or capitation tax an odious impost which served to keep up animosity between Mohammedans and non-Mohammedans. Raja Todar Mal is the author of reform in revenue system introduced in the reign of Akbar.

His domestic affliction and the loss of his intimate friends began to prey upon his spirits and undermine his health. In the middle of September, 1605 his complaint came on with additional violence accompanied by total loss of appetite. For the last 10 days he was confined to his bed and although he appears to have retained his faculties to the last he was no longer capable of taking part in business. When the end was near Akbar desired that all Omraos be assembled in the chamber where he was lying and when they were assembled he delivered a suitable address to them and after wistfully glancing them all round, he desired them to forgive any offences of which he might have been guilty towards them. Akbar permitted one of the chief priests to be brought to him and in his presence he repeated the Kalma and died in all the forms of a good Mussalman.

JEHANGIR

Salim took possession of the government immediately on his father's death and assumed the title of Jehangir (Conqueror of the world).

Among his earliest measures was one for affording easy access to complaints. A chain was hung from a part of the wall of

the citadel, accessible without difficulty, to all descriptions of people. It communicated with a cluster of golden bells within the Emperor's own apartment and he was immediately apprised by the sound of the appearance of a suitor and this rendered him independent of any officers inclined to keep back information.

Jehangir married Nur Jehan, daughter of Mirza Ghyas. She was born in circumstances of great distress. Her mother and she were the frequent visitors of the harem of Akbar. Nur Jehan because of her beauty and elegance attracted the notice of Jehangir, then Prince Salim. Akbar was informed of this and he remonstrated with his son. He recommended that Nur Jehan should be married at once and removed from the prince's sight. She was married to Sher Afghan. Jehangir tried to influence Sher Afghan to agree to Nur Jehan's being married to him. He refused. Sher Afghan took his revenge with his dagger and murdered the Viceroy who communicated Jehangir's wishes to him. Sher Afghan was immediately killed by the attendants of the Viceroy. Nur Jehan was seized and sent as a prisoner to Delhi. Jehangir soon after offered to marry her and applied all his address to soothe and conciliate her. Nur Jehan was a high-spirited woman. She rejected the offer. However, later on their marriage was celebrated with great pomp and Nur Jehan was raised to honours such as had never before been enjoyed by the consort of any king in India. From this period her ascendancy knew no bounds. Her father was made Prime Minister and her brother was placed in a high status. The Emperor took no step without consulting her, and on every affair in which she took an interest, her wish was the law.

Nur Jehan's capacity was no less than her grace and beauty. The magnificence of the Emperor's Court was increased by her taste, and expense was diminished by her good management.

Among the occurrences of Jehangir's reign may be mentioned an edict against the use of tobacco which was then a novelty.

Jehangir was taken ill in Kashmir with a severe attack of asthma and his life was in danger. An attempt was made to remove him to Lahore but before he had got over a third of his journey, he had a severe attack and died soon after reaching his tent in the 60th year of his age.

SHAH JEHAN

The influence of Nur Jehan had expired with her husband and the fruit of her long intrigues was lost in a minute. Nur Jehan endeavouring to support the cause of Shahryar was placed

under a temporary restraint by her brother and from that time although she survived for many years, her name is never again mentioned in history. Shah Jehan arrived at Agra and caused his accession to be proclaimed and took formal possession of the throne. He erected palaces in his principal cities. He got himself weighed against precious substances. He had vessels filled with jewels waved round his head and all the wealth was immediately distributed among the by-standers or given away in presents. The whole expense of the festival was Rs. 24,00,000.

The reign of Shah Jehan was perhaps the most prosperous ever known in India which enjoyed almost uninterrupted tranquillity with a very good government.

Notwithstanding Shah Jehan's love of ease and pleasure and the erection of those celebrated structures in which he took so much delight, he never remitted his intelligence over his internal government. For the order and arrangement of his territory and finances and the good administration of every department of the state, no prince ever reigned in India that could be compared to Shah Jehan. The state of India, under Shah Jehan, was one of great ease and prosperity. All travellers speak with admiration of the grandeur of the cities with fine streets, good shops, numerous baths and caravan-serais. Shah Jehan was the most magnificent prince that ever appeared in India. His retinue, his estate, establishments, his largeness and all the pomp of his Court were much increased beyond the point they had attained under his predecessors. The most striking instance of his pomp and prodigality was his construction of the famous Peacock Throne. It cost nearly 10 crores of rupees.

Of all the structures erected by Shah Jehan there is none that bears any comparison with the Taj Mahal at Agra—a mausoleum of white marble decorated with mosaics, which, for the richness of material, the chasteness of the design and the effect, at once brilliant and solemn is not surpassed by any other edifice either in Europe or Asia or anywhere in the world. Shah Jehan left a treasure more than 40 crores in coins besides his vast accumulations in gold, silver and jewels.

Shah Jehan reigned for 30 years. He was 67 years old when he was deposed and seventy-four when he died.

AURANGZEB

Aurangzeb sent his son to take complete possession of the citadel and to prevent all communications between the Emperor

and everyone beyond its walls. Shah Jehan was deposed. His reign ended. His habits of indulgence had impaired his energy, and as he had long ceased to head his armies, the troops turned their eyes to the princes who led them in the field and who controlled the immediate distribution of their honours and rewards. To this must be added the peculiar abilities of Aurangzeb who was more successful in defeating conspiracies and managing factions than others.

He forbade the solar era as an invention of fire-worshippers and directed the Mohammedan lunar year to be used on all occasions. He appointed a Mullah with a party of horse attached to him to suppress all drinking and gambling houses and to check all ostentatious display of idol-worship. He forbade fairs on Hindu festivals altogether and he issued an edict against music, dancing, etc., and discharged all singers and musicians attached to the palace. He likewise forbade astrology and dismissed the astrologers previously attached to the Court. He also discountenanced poets and abolished the office and salary of the royal poet. His prohibition of history was more permanent. He not only discontinued the regular annals of the Empire, but also effectually put a stop to all recording of the transactions. A few years later he reduced to half the customs paid by Mohammedans while he left those of Hindus undiminished.

At the beginning of his reign the Hindus served the state as zealously as the Mussalmans but their attachment declined due to the policy pursued by Aurangzeb. Discontent spread among the inhabitants of the Emperor's dominions. The Rajputs began to be disaffected and every Hindu became at heart hostile to Aurangzeb. Aurangzeb had courage, wisdom and ability, but he had not a generous heart. His narrow views regarding religion, his policy of suspicion and distrust chilled the zeal of his officers and created a gulf between him and his subjects. The Hindus were irritated by systematic discouragement and by acts of cruelty and oppression. They were excluded from office. They were degraded by a special tax, their fairs and festivals were forbidden, their temples were destroyed and desecrated. He very much detested Hindus and had very little good-will towards Shias. His government was a system of continual mistrust. Every man's character was secretly investigated and the colleagues were so selected that each might be a check on his neighbour.

He says in his letters, "I have committed numerous crimes and I know not with what punishments I may be served. The agonies of death came upon me fast." He expired on the 21st

February, 1707, in the 89th year of his life and 50th year of his reign.

BAHADUR SHAH

As soon as Prince Azam heard of his father's death he returned to camp and within a week was proclaimed sovereign of the whole of India in utter disregard of the late Emperor's will.

Prince Moazzim assumed the crown at Kabul with the ti le of Bahadur Shah also called Shah Alam I. Both brothers assetmbled very large armies and a bloody battle ensued near Agra. Prince Azam and his two grown-up sons were killed and his youngest son, an infant, was taken prisoner. Bahadur Shah was accepted as emperor. Prince Kambakhsh had admitted the sovereignty of Prince Azam but he refused to acknowledge Bahadur Shah as King. Bahadur Shah, after attempting in vain to win him over by concessions marched against him and defeated him in a battle where Kambakhsh died of his wounds on the same day. Bahadur Shah died in the 71st year of his age and 5th year of his reign.

INVASION OF NADIR SHAH

Nadir Shah invaded India in November, 1738 A.D. The Court of Delhi had been too much absorbed in the dread of the Marathas and its own internal factions to pay much attention to the proceedings of Nadir.

Nadir threw a bridge of boats over the Indus and advanced into the Punjab. Nadir met with no real opposition till he approached the Jumna within one hundred miles of Delhi when he found himself in the neighbourhood of Indian army. The result was the rout of Indian army and a complete surrender.

The army reached Delhi in the beginning of March. Nadir Shah distributed a portion of his troops throughout the town and placed safeguards in different places for the protection of the inhabitants. On the second day after the occupation of the city, a report was spread that Nadir Shah was dead on which the hatred of Indians broke forth without further restraint. They fell on all the Persians within their reach. A considerable number were killed. Nadir Shah at first applied his whole attention to suppress the rising but it continued during the whole night. He mounted his horse at daybreak in the hope that his presence would restore quiet. He was soon assailed with stones, arrows and firearms from the houses. At last one of his chiefs was killed by a shot aimed at Nadir Shah. He ordered a general massacre of the Indians,

The slaughter raged from sunrise till the day was far advanced and was attended with all the horrors that could be inspired by rapine, lust and thirst of vengeance. The city was set on fire in several places and it was all a scene of destruction, blood and horror. Nadir's sole object in invading India was to enrich himself by plunder. He took possession of the Imperial treasures and jewels including the celebrated Peacock Throne. The whole effects of great nobles were seized. Every man was compelled to disclose the amount of his fortune and to pay exorbitant sums. Great numbers of the inhabitants died of the treatment they received and many destroyed themselves to avoid disgrace and torture. Sleep and rest forsook the city. In every chamber and house was heard the cry of affliction. Nadir Shah exhausted all the sources from which wealth was to be obtained and prepared to return to his own dominions. He marched from Delhi after a stay of 58 days carrying with him a treasure in money amounting by the lowest computation to more than 2 crores of rupees, several crores in gold and silver. Valuable furniture and rick stuffs of every description and in addition to those, were jewels which were of inestimable value. He also carried off many elephants, horses and camels and led away the most skilful workmen and artisans in hundreds.

For sometime after Nadir Shah's departure the inhabitants of Delhi remained in a sort of stupor. They had not yet recovered from the terror of the past and the destruction of their fortunes, many of their houses were in ruins, much of the city was entirely deserted and the whole infected by the stench of the bodies which still lay unburied in the streets.

The Moghul Government was deteriorating and tottering. Internal dissensions were rampant. The prevailing faction was formed by Asaf Jah and Wazir Qamar-ud-Din Khan. To them were opposed all those desirous of supplanting them and the Emperor himself was included in them. This divided Government would have fallen an easy prey to the Marathas, had not circumstances procured it a respite from the encroachment of these invaders. Baji Rao formed a general league for the defence of India. He wrote, "Our domestic quarrels are now insignificant. There is but one enemy in Hindustan—Hindus and Mussalmans must assemble together." This advice is as much or perhaps more needed now as it was then.

Ahmed Shah Abdali, later changed into Durrani, had the command of his own tribe and extending his influence over the neighbouring tribes and countries, was formally declared the King of Qandhar. He began his march towards the East and soon

brought all the country up to the Indus under his authority. The circumstances in the Punjab helped his further advance and after taking possession of Lahore he pursued his march to the Sutlej. He was opposed by the Moghul army. He crossed the river, left the Indians in his rear and took Sirhind where their baggage and store had been deposited. He got possession of some guns. He repulsed the Moghul army. He did not quit the Punjab until the new Viceroy had agreed to pay a permanent tribute.

The new Moghul Emperor was in a state of continued anxiety and was obliged to sacrifice a portion of his independence for the sake of such allies as might secure him from foreign conquest.

The weakness of the Moghul Government was thus daily more displayed and intelligence arrived that Ahmed Shah had again invaded the Punjab. He had obtained complete possession and demanded a formal secession of that province which was agreed to by the then Emperor. There was a civil war carried on for six months in daily combats in the streets of Delhi. This was embittered by religious fury between the Shias and Sunnis.

The Moghul Vazir marched towards the Punjab and treacherously surprised the town and made the Governess prisoner in her bed while they were conveying her to the camp. She broke into invectives against the treachery of this Vazir and prophesied the ruin and the slaughter of its inhabitants. Ahmed Shah no sooner heard of this outrage than he flew to India to avenge it. He passed through the Punjab without opposition and presented himself within 20 miles of Delhi. He proceeded to Delhi to have pecuniary compensation, all the horrors of Nadir Shah's invasion were repeated on his arrival. Muttra was surprised by a light detachment during the night of a religious festival and wholesale slaughter was made of all the people gathered there.

The Marathas were gradually gaining power and Moghuls invoked their aid to repulse the attacks of Ahmed Shah. Raghoba marched and took possession of Lahore in 1758 and occupied the whole of the Punjab. They drew a plan for taking possession of Oudh and they talked about it without the least reserve of their intended conquest of the whole of Hindustan.

Ahmed Shah moved by the southern road of Shikarpur to Indus and marching up that river to Peshawar, crossed it in the month of September and advanced into the Punjab. The Marathas offered no opposition. Ahmed Shah came suddenly on the army

headed by Data Ji Sindhia and so effectually surprised it that the chief and two-thirds of the force was destroyed on the spot.

The Maratha power was at this time at its zenith. Their frontier extended on the north to the Indus and the Himalaya and on the south nearly to the extremity of the peninsula. The whole of this great power was wielded by one hand and all pretensions of every description were concentrated in the Peshwa. It had an army of well-paid and well-counted cavalry and 10,000 disciplined infantry who were far superior to any infantry previously known in India. The Marathas had a train of artillery surpassing that of the Moghuls Rich dresses, spacious tents and splendid canopies were very common among them. Ahmed Shah marched towards Delhi. The Maratha forces retired to Panipat. Both the sides encamped and threw up works round their camps. Both sides had entirely exhausted the last remains of their provisions. In this extremity Bao wrote to Kashi Rao a short note with his own hand, "The cup is now full to the brim and cannot hold another drop. If anything can be done, do it or else answer me plainly at once, hereafter there will be no time for writing or speaking." There was a furious battle between both the sides and all at once as if by enchantment the whole Maratha army turned their backs and fled at full speed leaving the field of battle covered with heaps of the dead. The victors pursued them with utmost fury and as they gave no quarter, the slaughter can scarcely be imagined. A large proportion of those who escaped from the enemy were cut off by the peasants and great numbers who fell alive into the hands of the Durranis were cruelly massacred in cold blood. The Shah himself was not exempt from a share in these barbarities.

Never was a defeat more complete and never was there a calamity which diffused so much consternation. Grief and despondency spread over the whole Maratha people. All felt the destruction of the army as a death-blow to their national greatness. Dissensions soon broke after the death of the Peshwa and the Government never regained its vigour. The confederacy of the Mohammedan princes dissolved on the cessation of their common danger. Ahmed Shah returned home without attempting to profit by the victory and never afterwards took any share in the affairs of India.

The history of the Moghul empire here closes. Its territory was broken into separate states, the capital was deserted, the claimant to the name of an Emperor was an exile and dependent.

And thus the Moghul rule came to an end. An empire founded by Babar and so well maintained and extended by Akbar and

governed by eminent luminaries became a thing of the past and the cause is not far to seek. Internal dissensions, domestic feuds and jealousies leading to factions, love of ease and luxury, religious fanaticism, bigotry, mutual distrust and hatred are some of the factors that brought about the dissolution and such a shock India received by this downfall that till to-day we are slaves in our own country and foreigners on our land.

CHAPTER IV

Foreigners in India

It was to discover the sea route to India that Columbus begged the leading sovereigns of Europe to equip him with a fleet. The European nations vied with one another in discovering the sea route to India. India, Golden India, haunted them in their dreams. In their imagination India was the richest country in the world, a country which supplied the markets of Europe with so many wonderful articles of commerce. The Europeans set sail to the East to amass wealth.

The sea route to India was discovered by Vasco Da Gama who landed at Calicut on the 22nd May, 1498. He and his companions were very hospitably treated by Zamorin, the Hindu Raja of Calicut. Little did he know that he was entertaining people who would uproot his dynasty and supplant his authority and the land which he ruled would pass into the hands of foreign adventurers who were then sitting at his feet and praying him to grant them permission to trade in India. In 1500 the Portuguese established a factory at Calicut Three years later they built a fortress in that place. The Governor plundered the town and burnt the palace of its Kings thus showing gratitude to Zamorin who had given them home in his kingdom. The Portuguese had no difficulty in scoring victories over India. For over a century they monopolised the profitable traffic of the Indian seas and the Portuguese adventurers surprised Europe with the collossal and gigantic fortunes they had so rapidly amassed. They were the first European nation to acquire political power in India and they tried to maintain it by the policy of *divide et impera* by playing off one state against another on the Malabar coast.

The Portuguese entered with sword in one hand and the crucifix in the other; finding much gold they laid aside the crucifix

Patel

The Sentinel of the Congress

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to fill their pockets, and not being able to hold them up with one hand they were grown so heavy, they dropped the sword too, and thus being found in this posture by those who came after, they were easily overcome.

THE DANES

The Danes originally established their trade in Bengal in 1698. The Danish flag was hoisted at Serampur on October 8, 1755. In 1808 the sun of Danish prosperity set for ever in Bengal. England robbed Denmark of her fleet at Coppenhagen and a detachment of the British troops crossed over from Barrackpore and took possession of Serampur. At the beginning of 1844 their territory was transferred to the British Government for the sum of 12 lakhs of rupees.

THE DUTCH

The Dutch came to trade with India towards the close of 16th century. They established their factories and built fortresses near Madras. They prospered as long as they confined their energies to a steady prosecution of commerce. They carried on an extensive trade in Bengal and established themselves at Chinsura in 1675. But at last they got tired of commercial pursuits and they aspired to rule India. At the request of Mir Jafar, the Dutch got a fleet to help against the English. Clive sent his officers to attack the Dutch army. The Dutch were thus baffled in their attempt to supplant the English. From this onwards trade declined and they gave their settlements to the English.

THE ENGLISH IN INDIA

For over half a century the English sailors tried hard to reach India by the North-West passage. But all these attempts ended in failure. The Company which had been formed to trade with East received its Charter in 1600 A.D. The Charter granted by Queen Elizabeth was to the 'Society of Adventurers' which became constituted into the East India Company. This Company fought shy of having 'Gentlemen' as its members! The Company to the very last day of its existence consisted of adventurers, many of whom hardly deserved being called gentlemen. Adventurers, as a rule, do not observe any code of morality or ethics or show traits of good breeding.

The first native of England to set foot on Indian soil was Capt. Hawkins. In 1608 he came to India with a letter from James I, the then King of England and went to Jehangir who treated him

hospitably. In 1612 Surat fell into the hands of the English, thus raising their national prestige in the East. On February 6, 1613, a treaty was arranged with the Emperor Jehangir by which permission was granted to the English to establish a factory in Surat. Sir Thomas Roe was the first English ambassador, at the Court of the Great Moghul, who laid the foundation of English trade with India.

There is a story that in 1644 Jehanara, a favourite daughter of the Great Moghul, Shah Jehan was severely burnt at Agra. The Court physicians and surgeons could not effect a cure. Shah Jehan despatched a messenger to Surat desiring the services of one of the English doctors. They selected Dr. Boughton. By his skilful treatment the princess recovered. Shah Jehan asked him to name his own reward. The patriotic Englishman requested that the East India Company might be allowed to trade in Bengal, free of duty, to establish factories in the province and also that the Company's ships be allowed to come up the Hugli. Shah Jehan granted that *farman.*

The island of Bombay was presented to Charles II in 1661. In 1688 it was sold to the East India Company. Thus the East India Company established its factories on the eastern as well as the western coasts of India, and as a trading corporation, it was a great success.

Immense fortunes were made by every one connected with the Company in any capacity. Charles II granted the Company a charter on 3rd April, 1661 and vested in it authority to make war or peace with any prince or people.

THE FRENCH IN INDIA

A company named 'Compaigne Des Indes' was formed in France in 1664. The credit for this belongs to the French Minister, Colbert. He succeeded in inducing the French Monarch Louis XIV to grant many concessions and privileges to the company. An exclusive right of commerce with India for 50 years, an entire exemption from taxation, the Government guaranteeing the Company against all loss during the first ten years, were some of the privileges conferred on this Company. In 1668 French established a factory at Surat. Masulipatam was founded a year later and Pondichery in 1674.

M. Dumas initiated the policy towards establishing a French Empire in India. Dupleix tried to carry out. The Moghul Emperor conferred the title of Nawab on M. Dumas and

he was officially recognised as an officer of the Moghul Empire. He was succeeded by Dupleix who was a remarkable man possessing great talents, unbounded ambitions and was, like Napoleon, a born leader of men. He aimed at establishing a French Empire in India but he failed because his superior genius provoked the envy and malice of his own countrymen. France did not like the policy by which Dupleix planned to conquer India. The French preferred peace to the glory of an empire. The English East India Company and the French 'compaigne De Indes,' notwithstanding that England and France were at peace, each kept an army on the field to fight the battles of Indian Princes who required their services not with the intention of helping him but to strike a deadly blow at its European rival.

The French and the English Companies as well as the ministers in Europe came to the conclusion that there would be no peace between the English and the French as long as Dupleix remained in India at the head of French affairs. The French ministers considered Dupleix's policy as a villainous one. Hence they recalled him to France in 1754. All his dreams of Franco-Indian Empire came to nothing. He was disgraced and died in comparative poverty. After the recall of Dupleix, France determined not to interfere in the internal affairs of India. The French Company came to an end in 1769. Pondicherry and Chandernagar only have been left to the French as their possessions in India.

WHY THE ENGLISH SUCCEEDED

The English were not the first or the only European nation to come to India. There were the Portuguese, the Dutch, the Danes, and the French in India. How is it that the English succeeded in establishing their power in India while others failed to do so? The reason is plain and simple. They were much less honest than the other nations and they were very scheming and very successfully played the dirty game of setting one against the other. It is true that India was in political chaos. The British took fullest advantage of our difficulties and dissensions, fanned the flames of mutual discord and distrust and widened the gulf between one power and another to establish their supremacy and superiority. Britishers could not have acquired any political power in India but for the help they received from traitors among Indians. The British took fullest advantage of the human weakness of self-aggrandisement and thus encouraged the people to turn traitors and betray the interests of their country. For the sake of filthy lucre

Indians did dirty jobs for foreigners and by co-operating with them did not hesitate to rivet the chains of slavery round the necks of their countrymen. The Britishers came to India as traders; their first relations were commercial. They were kindly received by the Indians, they were permitted to build factories upon her coasts, but alas, for India! They took advantage of our weaknesses and disorganised state then prevailing and manoeuvred to acquire political power. This is a myth that the British conquered India. The English never conquered India by sword. The weaknesses of the Indian character as exhibited in their simplicity and faithfulness and their credulous nature made them easy victims to the wily scheming merchants of England. The system which for more than a century the Britishers adopted to strip the Indian princes of their dominions and that too under the most sacred pleas of right and expediency was a system of torture more exquisite than political or spiritual tyranny that has ever been discovered because the world has nothing similar to show. Fatal was the friendship of the English to the Princes who were allied with them. It pulled every one of them from their thrones or left them there the contemptible puppets of a power that works its will through them. They were ensnared in those webs of diplomacy from which they never escaped without the loss of honour and dominions and of everything indeed but with the lot of prisoners where they had been kings.

A high official was sent to Poona by the Bombay Government for the purpose of using every endeavour by fomenting the domestic dissensions or otherwise to bring about the fall of the Marathas. Systematic plottings, intrigues, prevarications, and distrust were the favourite methods of the British to establish their dominions. The ruin of Indian trades and industries as well as the political downfall of India may be said to have dated from the day when the Moghul Emperor with the generosity and magnanimity characteristic of an Asiatic sovereign granted such terms to the foreign merchants of the British nationality trading in India as no European power would ever think of giving to any nation. Under the guise of traders, these foreigners conspired for the conquest of India.

The rise of the British East India Company's supremacy in India is inseparably connected with their treachery towards and connivance at if not actually instigating the assassination of Siraj-ud-daula. The English were intriguing and conspiring against him and he had just grounds of being dissatisfied with the perfidious conduct of the English. It is an English proverb which says, "Give him an inch and he will ask for an ell." The truth of this proverb

was exemplified in the behaviour of the English towards the Nawab. Insulted and treated with contempt by the English shop-keepers trading in his dominions, Siraj-ud-daula determined to extirpate them from Bengal. He sent his troops to capture the British factory at Kasimbazaar. The British surrendered. This was a great blow to the prestige of the English but the humane Siraj-ud-daula did not treat them as rebels, which they really were, and did not make short work of them by executing them. Siraj-ud-daula's march on Calcutta is a matter of great historic importance. The truth is that the English who were thoroughly mobilised by the exhibition of superior military tactics by Siraj-ud-daula. Englishmen effected their retreat in disgrace. The humiliation was complete and they felt very keenly the loss of Calcutta. It was a fatal catastrophe ever recorded in the annals of the people. Siraj-ud-daula in his hour of triumph showed that magnanimity and generosity of conduct which was due to his being an oriental and having belonged to that part of the world which had produced Buddha. There are very cogent reasons to believe that the so-called Blackhole tragedy never occurred. It is a pure myth. Clive in his letter to the Directors explaining the reasons why Siraj-ud-daula was dethroned does not even refer to the Blackhole incident. Holwell who started this propaganda never possessed any great reputation for scrupulous regard for truth. His compatriots considered it a letter of specious fibs. The Blackhole tragedy was a false story invented by interested Europeans to serve their ulterior ends.

It was decided by the Madras Council to send a very large force in order to recover Bengal and the command of the expedition was given to Colonel Clive (later Lord Clive). Calcutta was easily recaptured by the Company's servants because its Governor, Manak Chand, who was a traitor and was in collusion with the English, had already fled away. He made no stand at Calcutta. This is a clear indication of treachery on the part of Manak Chand. After having regained possession of Calcutta the English conspired and intrigued against the Nawab. Siraj-ud-daula had a strong desire to live at peace with the English but patching up a friendship with the English was something like building a house on fleeing sand The Nawab who had left Murshidabad with his army reached Calcutta on 4th February, 1757.

The English were to attack the Nawab. The troops under Clive and other officers attacked the Nawab's camp early the next morning. The conduct of the English was highly reprehensible. They were negotiating for peace with the Nawab who did not anticipate any foul treachery on their part. The attack on the

Nawab's camp cannot be justified at all. He had to conclude a treaty with the English who like the wolf in the fable were on the look out for the pretext of a muddled stream to devour the Nawab. They were bent upon mischief and wanted to exasperate the Nawab and thus provoke him to hostilities. The Nawab was disgusted with the conduct and behaviour of the perfidious English. Siraj was an angel compared to Watson-Clive and Company. His great fault was that he wanted to be true to himself and also to the English who were devoid of conscience and were strangers to honesty and veracity. The honest Siraj not acquainted with the scheming and designing character of the English was no match for them in their trickery and chicanery in politics. By smooth and specious promise and also with money the English succeeded in seducing the courtiers of Siraj. Amin Chand was instrumental in making the conspiracy of the English against the Nawab a success. He did all the dirty work of occidental diplomacy. He was false to himself, false to his sovereign and false to his country and nation. He was faithful to Clive-Watson & Co., who lacked all sense of honour and honesty and who did not scruple to deceive Amin Chand by the foulest means that ever disgraced the annals of human race. Amin Chand insisted upon 5 per cent. of all the Nawab's treasures and 30 lacs in money. It was proposed by Clive and his colleagues to draw up two treaties, one containing an article granting Amin Chand the sum he demanded and another treaty from which it should be excluded.

CHAPTER V

British Domination

The Battle of Plassey

CLIVE marched his troops to Plassey which is 20 miles away from Murshidabad. Here on 23rd June, 1757, a battle was fought which certainly did not reflect any credit on the arms of the English, least of all on Clive. Siraj's army was demoralised and corrupted by the English. There were traitors in his camp, the most notorious being Mir Jafar, his Commander-in-Chief, who had a secret understanding with the British. Siraj-ud-daula was defeated because of treason. Clive was able to advance without the certainty of being annihilated. Plassey was a decisive battle but not a great battle. It was fought for a treacherous cause in which the English prostituted their military strength. The English had so managed the affairs that Siraj-ud-daula had no confidence in his army and his army had no confidence in him and therefore they did not do their duty. The sun of Siraj's fortune had set and as no one worships the setting sun so no man came to his rescue. He was advised by some of his courtiers to surrender himself to the British. It is needless to say that he treated this advice with the contempt which it very richly deserved.

It was Clive who after the victory put £2,34,000 into his own pocket and then stood astonished as his moderation.

It did not cost Clive and his compatriots any tang of conscience—supposing they were endowed with that commodity at all—to have cheated Amin Chand who had all along been so useful to them and had rendered important services without which they could not have succeeded in their nefarious scheme of dethroning Siraj and effecting the revolution in Bengal.

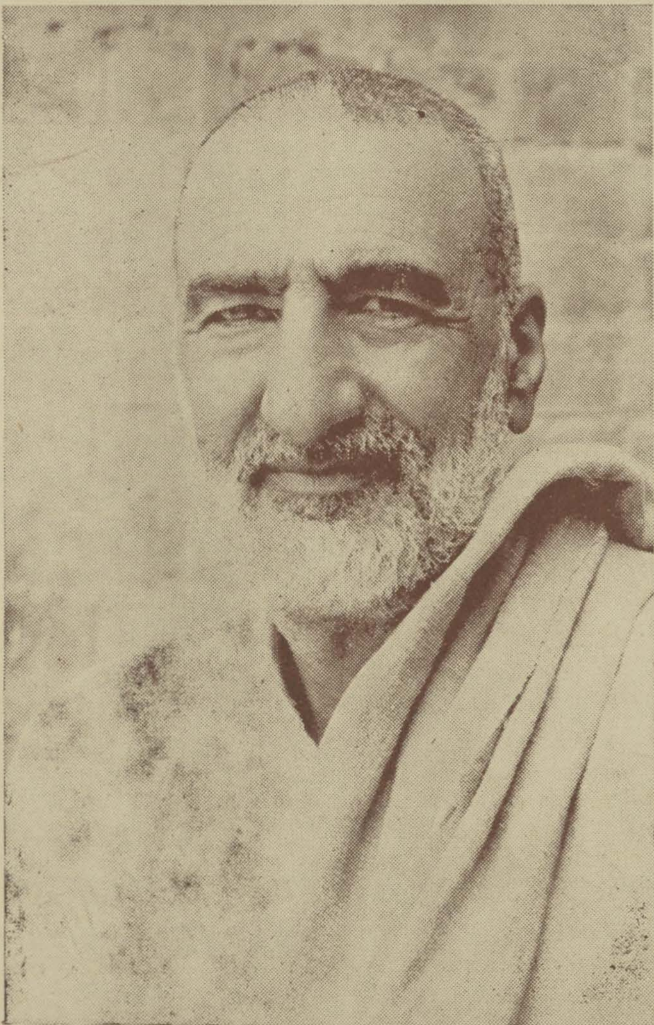
Mir Jafar was not a happy man. His voluntary embrace of the English merchants was proving to him to be something like that of a python.

The English had not come to India for the sake of pilgrimage. Gold was their God for they were all Mammon worshippers. So they began to extort heavy sums from Mir Jafar who could not pay these because his treasury had already been drained. Never before did the English nation, at one time, obtain such a prize in gold money. It was nearly a crore of rupees, Clive received a jagir of the enormous value of Rs. 5 lacs per year. This was extorted from Mir Jafar by Clive who retired to England to outshine the aristocracy of his native land by the display of his wealth and pass for an Indian Nawab.

In less than 3 years' time after the assassination of Sirajud-daula the English had gained all, nay more than all the advantages they had expected and hoped for and yet the English conspired against Mir Jafar too, to divest him and his family of the government of Bengal and to raise in his stead a creature of their own. They succeeded remarkably in their intrigues against the Nawab whom they ultimately deposed from the throne of Bengal in the middle of October 1760. He was a sworn and bloodknit ally of the Company and yet for the sum of 30 lacs privately paid to them they sold their friend and ally. Mir Kasim who succeeded Mir Jafar granted the English the permission to establish a mint in Calcutta and allowed thier coins to pass current in Bengal. The three provinces of Burdwan, Midnapur and Chittagong were also handed over to them.

On the 7th of July a proclamation of war was issued against Mir Kasim and of restoration of Mir Jafar to the masnad of Bengal. Mir Kasim had tried hard to live on terms of peace with the English but they tried to fleece him more and more. He had paid them 30 lacs of rupees in hard cash, permitted them to coin their own siccas, given them the revenues of three fertile districts. But the English were very rapacious and grabbing. Nothing could satisfy their hunger for gold and at last he was defeated by treachery, corruption and fraud. He was seized with a lingering illness which culminated in his death on 7th June, 1777. Thus died the last independent Nawab of Bengal who made the supreme sacrifice in an attempt to save the Indian merchants from imminent ruin. Mir Jafar was restored to Nawabship but he did not live long to enjoy this position. He was being treated much worse than he had been treated during the first period of his Nawabship.

BADSHAH KHAN



The six feet three of sacrifice and passion for India's freedom

After Mir Jafar's death the English raised Najam-ud-daula, a boy of 15, to the throne and forced a new treaty on him. He was made a non-entity and was made to realize that he had no hand in the management of his own affairs.

Lord Clive landed at Calcutta in 1765. He wanted to place a grandson of Mir Jafar on the masnad and so he was enraged when he found himself thwarted and showed great indignation when he learnt that his compatriots had extorted 20 lacs of rupees from the new Nawab as the price for getting him on the throne of Murshidabad. Lord Clive wrote to a friend, "Alas! how is the English name sunk! I could not avoid paying the tribute of a few tears to the departed and lost fame of the British nation. I do declare by that great Being who is the searcher of all hearts and to whom we must be accountable that I have come out with a mind superior to all corruption and that I am determined to destroy those great and growing evils or perish in the attempt." Clive wrote to the Board of Directors:

"The sources of tyranny and oppression which have been opened by the European agents under the authority of Company's servants and the numberless black agents and sub-agents acting also under them will, I fear, be a lasting reproach to the English name in this country. Ambition, success, luxury have, I find, introduced a new system of politics at the severe expense of English honour, of the Company's faith and even of common justice and humanity.'

Clive had a meeting with Shuja-ud-daula and a treaty was imposed on the Vazir by which he had to surrender Allahabad and agree to pay to the Company a crore of rupees as compensation for expenses incurred in the war.

He met the Moghul Emperor, Shah Alam, at Allahabad on 9th August, 1765. This was the occasion when Shah Alam tolled the death-knell of the Moghul Empire by signing the grant of Dewani of Bengal, Behar and Orissa to the East India Company. There can be little doubt that the grant of Dewani was extorted by playing on the fears of the Emperor: that is by fraud and force.

Najam-ud-daula died suddenly and under suspicious circumstances and it is not unreasonable to suspect the English in general and Clive in particular, of conspiracy in causing the death of this Nawab. The rumour in Calcutta attributed the death to some foul play on the part of Clive. With the death of the Nawab the semblance of power possessed by these Nawabs disappeared from the annals of Bengal. From henceforth the history of Bengal is interwoven with the names of English Governors,

Clive came out ostensibly for reforming the administration of the East India Company and remove the abuses in its affairs but he talked much and did nothing. It was not in his interests to have made any reforms in the administration. His character did not command respect from any body ; he had no influence in his country or with his own fellow countrymen. They looked upon him as a moral leper, a self-seeking man who could not scruple to do anything to further his own interests. He not only feathered his own nest but also helped his countrymen to do same. He left India for good in 1767. He behaved in England as an Indian Nawab. He was impeached. He appeared before a Parliamentary Committee to explain his conduct regarding the political transactions which led to the establishment of the English rule in India. His suicide was attributed to the pricking of his guilty conscience to committing a forgery regarding Amin Chand, to his abetting the assassination of Siraj-ud-daula and Najam-ud-daula and to his seduction of the wives of his many English friends and thus making their homes unhappy. He was unscrupulous and in his nature gratitude had no existence.

The double system of Government produced the worst results possible. There was anarchy in the country and life and property were not safe. The English were mainly responsible for bringing about this state of affairs in the country. The trade, in important articles of prime necessity, was monopolised by them, industries were crushed and jewellery, gold and silver as well coined money of every description were being taken out of the country by them. Consequenly there was scarcity of money in the country. The society in Bengal was disorganised.

WARREN HASTINGS

Warren Hastings was more unscrupulous than Clive, so he cast his greedy eyes on the wealth and earthly possessions of his neighbours whom he wanted to fleece for his own benefit and also for that of his masters. The period of aggression commenced with Warren Hastings in whose regime wars were waged with some of the Indian powers and the skill of Western diplomacy was used against others which did not raise the British people in the estimate of the people of India. No period of British Indian history is so well-known as the thirteen years during which Warren Hastings presided over Indian affairs. This is principally due to his impeachment which brought to light his acts and deeds of acquiring political supremacy in the country. In July, 1749, Warren Hastings came to India as a writer in the Company's

establishment at Calcutta. He retired to England in 1764. He came back to India in 1768 as the Governor of Bengal. He took the management of the Dewani out of the hands of Indian deputies. He arrested two of them and brought them to Calcutta. Warren Hastings received several lakhs of rupees from these two deputies who were acquitted after a year through his influence and intervention.

The shadow of authority which the Nawab possessed was removed and the Company's authority over the whole of Bengal, Behar and Orissa was exhibited in bold relief. But the Company was still a vassal of the Great Moghul. Warren Hastings decided to deprive the Emperor of the tribute. He removed every landmark of Indian Government from the administration of Bengal. Warren Hastings was made the first Governor-General of India, the presidencies of Madras, and Bombay being placed under that of Bengal.

Hastings utterly lacked all sense of honour either in public or private life. In every transaction his conduct was prompted by greed and selfishness. He deprived Mohd. Raza Khan of the Nawabship of Bengal by ordering an inquiry into his embezzlement and malpractices. But on receiving ten lakhs as bribe, he dropped the inquiry. Nand Kumar disclosed the secret and in order to wreak his vengeance, Hastings charged Nand Kumar with forgery alleged to be committed five years before this and got him executed.

The foundation of the political power of the East India Company was based on the forgery committed by Clive but that 'heaven born' general was rewarded generously for his villainous conduct while the Bengal Brahman was hanged for a similar offence even though this is not certain that he was guilty of it. Nand Kumar was a thorn in the side of Hastings and so the Governor-General was extremely glad to have got rid of him. During the regime of Warren Hastings people were plundered by collectors and judges whose only aim in life was to rob the rich. Justice was dealt out to the highest bidders by the judges and thieves paid a regular revenue to rob with impunity. The crooked politics and shameless breach of faith affected princess and rich, the deposition of zamindars, the plundering of Begums, the extermination of the Rohillas and the cruelties acted in Gorakhpore will for ever be quoted to the dishonour of the British name. The system upon which India is being governed has affected the happiness of the people. To tear a nation as an article of trade for the profit which is to be derived seems a solecism in politics. The treatment of

the people has been such as will make them remember the yoke as the heaviest than ever any conquerors put upon the necks of the conquered nations.

When Warren Hastings received information that Nana Fadnavis had succeeded in combining Hydar and the Nizam against the English, he informed the Bombay Government of his intention of making peace with the Marathas. Negotiations proceeded for some months and at last a treaty was concluded at Salbye on 17th May, 1782. The whole of the territory which had been taken possession of by the English by fraud and force since the treaty of Purandar was restored to the Marathas. The territories of Gaekwad and the whole of Gujerat were to remain precisely on the same footing as prior to 1775; with the conclusion of the treaty ended the first Maratha War. It did not bring any new territories into the possession of the British. It showed them their weak points and proved to demonstrate that the Marathas were not to be easily vanquished. It was a glorious triumph for the Marathas.

THE RISE OF THE OUDH PRINCIPALITY

Like some brilliant comet, which rises on the firmament and illumines the sky for a very short time but whose appearance is regarded as a harbinger of evils by the people, was the origin of the principality of Oudh. It rose and became independent of the paramount Moghul power by means of treachery and its existence was like that of an ominous comet for it never did good either to the Indian people or the Moghul emperor. On the contrary it materially contributed to the rise of British power in India not only by means of intrigues but by furnishing assistance both in money and men. It was Oudh which supplied men to the Indian army. The English are very much indebted to the princes and people of Oudh for the extension and consolidation of their power.

The founder of this Oudh dynasty was a Persian who came to India when the decadence of the Moghul Empire had commenced. He is known as Saadat Khan.

Nizam-ul-Mulk was the first traitor in the camp of the Moghuls who set the example to others of making himself independent of the Delhi Emperor. Saadat Khan acted independently of Nizam-ul-Mulk but he was no less a traitor than Nizam-ul-Mulk and both of them wanted to curry favour with Nadir Shah but he reaped what he had sown. He was brought to a miserable and

ignominous end. They who are most active in entrapping others are the easiest to be entrapped themselves. His nephew Safdar Jang was invested with the Vizarat of the Moghul Empire and this honour was hereditary. These are called Nawab Vazirs. His son Shuja-ud-daula was the first Nawab of Oudh to come in contact with the English.

HYDAR ALI

It was not the Marathas alone who tried to expel the English from India. Hydar Ali struggled hard to get rid of them and in none of the contests engaged with him the English were ever successful. Hydar Ali was a private soldier in the employ of the Raja of Mysore. He was totally illiterate. He was a keen observer of men and events of his time. He noticed the process by which the British had made themselves masters of Bengal and other provinces of India and he adopted the same methods. He had been engaged in several actions with the English and his sound generalship made him always triumphant over his adversaries. He was the most formidable Mohammedan enemy whom they had ever encountered. The brilliancy of his achievements dazzled his enemies.

The great Nana Fadnavis proposed to Hydar Ali an alliance against the English. He offered his very advantageous terms.

Hydar defeated the English. 700 English were killed and 2000 taken prisoners. This disaster was most fatal that had ever overtaken the English in India and Hydar had it commemorated at Seringaptam by an elaborate painting of the walls of Darya Daulat Garden. Hydar was not vanquished. He was in the midst of his career of conquest when he died on 7th December, 1782. This was a fortunate event for the British because it brought the war to a close. His death was a great loss. Hydar was altogether free from fanaticism. Hydar possessed many qualities of the head and heart. He was a born soldier, an excellent rider and skilful alike with his sword and gun. He was a born leader. His administrative qualities were of a high order. As a soldier he was without any equals in India and without many in the world.

THE RISE OF THE NIZAM DYNASTY

The history of the rise of the first Nizam dynasty is important from the fact that he was the first servant of the Moghul Emperor to deal the death blow at the supremacy of his master's rule in India. The downfall of the Moghul rule was due not a little to the example set by the Nizam. He was a traitor to his

sovereign and to his country, and his rise was due to treachery, intrigue, cunning and the many questionable means he adopted.

Two Sayyad brothers, Abdulla Khan and Hussain Ali Khan, came to possess great influence in the declining days of Moghul rule. They are known in history as King-makers. The murder of the one and the imprisonment of the other precipitated the downfall of the Empire. This was due to the machination of Nizam-ul-mulk who is also suspected of having induced Nadir Shah to invade Hindustan.

He brought about the supremacy of Europeans in this country. Nizam-ul-mulk defeated the Sayyad brothers and he was now the most powerful subject in the Moghul Empire. He was the Vazir or Prime Minister of the Empire. He resigned the office and proceeded to Deccan and raised the standard of defiance. He conspired against his sovereign to destroy the empire but the Hindu Viceroys did all they could to uphold the empire. They were loyal and they exerted their utmost for the safety and greatness of the Moghul Empire. Nizam-ul-mulk had a hand in all the troubles and disasters which befell Delhi during the invasion of Nadir Shah.

LORD CORNWALLIS

From 1786 Lord Cornwallis was appointed Governor General of India even though he was instrumental in losing the colonies of America. When he came to India he found an empty treasury and the portion of India under the administration of the East India Company poverty-stricken, for the people had ceased cultivation and famine had rendered desolate many a smiling village and town. Greater India under Indian rulers was very prosperous. It was Cornwallis who could boast that for the first time the British had obtained territory in India by conquest. Not an inch of land which they possessed in India previous to the war with Tipu had been obtained by conquest. From the time of Clive all the acquisitions of land by the East India Company were by means of diplomacy, fraud and usurpation.

Cornwallis succeeded in adding almost the whole of the French settlements to the English possession. His governing idea in the administration of India was to have India not for Indians but for England. To do this effectively he adopted means calculated to demoralise the Indian people. He succeeded in establishing the British supremacy in India. Neither Clive nor Warren Hastings went the length which Cornwallis did in permanently

excluding the children of the Indian soil from all high offices of trust and responsibility not only in the military but in the civil Government of their country. He tried to have a monopoly of all the power in the hands of his own countrymen and reduced the children of the soil to the condition of hewers of wood and drawers of water. If the people of India have become litigious and perjury is common in Indian courts it is not because the Indians are naturally so but because the circumstances which Cornwallis introduced into the country for the benefit of his co-religionists and compatrtios have demoralised Indians.

MARQUESS WELLESLEY'S ADMINISTRATION 1798—1805

The history of the British in India entered on a new stage when Marquess of Wellesley was sent out as Governor-General of India. He coloured red the map of a large part of India and to achieve this he did not scruple to adopt means the nature of which he never stooped to question. It is conjectured by some that during this time Pitt instructed Wellesley to find an Empire in India to compensate for the loss of America.

He brought his two brothers—Arthur the future Duke of Wellington and younger brother as his private secretary, along with him. Thus a cabal of the three brothers was formed in India with the sole object of carrying out the instructions of Mr. Pitt as to the forming of an empire for England in India.

To make the exterior symbols of the Christian power visible in India Marquess Wellesley took certain measures to impress on the minds of Indians that the Company's Government was a Christian Government. It is clear that Lord Wellesley contributed not a little to the rise of the Chiristian power in India by the sword and that shedding of blood and fraud and force as well as trying to make the Holy Bible accessible to Indians in their own languages were the means adopted by him. He was determined to annihilate or curb the Mussalmans and Marathas by force or fraud. This explains his machianation policy and occidental diplomacy in dealing with Hindustan. After having conquered Tipu's dominion by force Wellesley cast his longing eyes on the fertile territories of those Indian princes with whom the East India Company had concluded treaties of perpetual friendship. Oudh was the garden of India. So Wellesley could not resist the temptation of swallowing it.

THE RISE OF THE MARATHAS

From the time of Shivaji dates the rise of the Marathas. He founded the most powerful kingdom in India on the ruins of Moghuls.

Shivaji, although illiterate, combined in himself the genius of a general, the accomplishments of a statesman and the qualifications of an administrator. He was born in 1627. His father Shahji was an officer in the service under the Mohammedan ruler. But he did not remain long in that service. Shivaji is regarded as a divine incarnation by the people of Maharashtra because he was instrumental in checking the Moghul advance.

Shivaji did not create the Maratha power; this had already been created though scattered in small centres all over the country. He sought to unite it for a higher purpose by directing it against the common danger. This was his chief merit and his chief service to the country, and in this consists his chief claim upon the grateful remembrance of his people. It was not for nothing that the people looked up to him as their inspired leader. Shivaji combined in himself the enthusiasm and idealism of Mazzini, military genius of Garibaldi and the statesmanship of Cavour, while the noble qualities which he displayed as the king of the Marathas have hardly been surpassed by any monarch either before or after him. He was not a man only of this world but he always thought of the next world also. It is true that he was a soldier, a statesman and a king but above all these, he was intensely religious.

He had for his spiritual guide or Guru the celebrated Saint Ram Dass. A great deal of Shivaji's career was influenced by the teaching of this holy man. Shivaji was much in advance of the time in which he lived. He kept his hands clean from the performance of such vile deeds which conquerors generally resort to. His chivalrous respect for the female sex was mainly due to the influence which his mother exercised over him from his childhood. He was brought up by his mother Jijabai who could evoke feelings of respect from one and all. His success was phenomenal. He carved out a kingdom for himself and he so consolidated it that it stood the shocks of the invasion of the Mohammedans and the Englishmen and ultimately brought about the downfall of the mighty Moghuls.

Like the first Napoleon he was a great organiser and a builder of civil institutions which conduced largely to the success of the movement initiated by him. Shivaji's conception of the

civil and military administration was perfect and it may be added that no better system had been worked out in any country.

Shivaji died on 4th April, 1680 at the age of 53. His son Shambhuji succeeded him. He inherited the military genius of his father but he made himself odious to the generality of his subjects because he was cruel and vicious. Shambhuji was ordered by Aurangzeb to be executed after putting out his eyes and cutting out his tongue. This cruel execution aroused the indignation of the Marathas and made them the deadliest enemies of the Moghuls. His son Shivaji who was 6 years old at that time was taken prisoner by Aurangzeb. He gave him an appellation of Sahu and he was made a victim of *post* (opium preparation). He was a very weak prince and was a half lunatic. He had imbibed the loose morals of the Moghul Court and kept a large harem. Under such circumstances his authority was confined to a narrow tract, *viz.*, Satara and he conferred the powers of the Government on the Prime Minister known as the Peshwa. This was the origin of the Peshwa rule. In Salim's time Balaji Vishvanath was the Peshwa and he succeeded in making the Peshwaship a hereditary office. The Peshwas should be hailed as saviours of the Marathas' power. From the death of Aurangzeb till the fatal battle of Panipat the Peshwas were engaged in extending and consolidating their Empire.

The valour and genius of Shivaji laid the foundations of the Empire, the imprudence and intrigue of Raghunath Rao precipitated its fall. The latter was instrumental in bringing the Marathas into conflict with the Afghans which resulted in the battle of Panipat and later still with the English which ended in the break-up of the great Shivaji's Empire.

The battle fought at Panipat in 1761 sealed the fate of the Maratha supremacy in India. The Marathas were defeated and turned back towards Deccan. It was Raghoba, as Raghunath Rao he was called, who by his impudence excited the wrath of the ruler of Kabul and thus brought on the battle of Panipat.

Raghoba's intriguing character became fully evident in his dealings with the English. He concluded a treaty with the East India Company and entered into an alliance with the English which sapped the foundations of the Maratha Empire. Nana Farnavis discovered that Raghoba was merely a tool in the hands of the Bombay Government and that the end of the Maratha Empire would not be far off if Raghoba continued to hold the Peshwaship. He shrank from the political embrace of the English and steadily refused to accept their offers of armed assistance. Raghoba and

Nana were not friendly to each other because their views regarding the administration of the Maratha Empire were diametrically opposed.

Raghoba entered into a treaty with the Bombay Government by which he gave up Salsette and Bassein. This led to the first Maratha War. The Bombay Government sent troops to assist Raghoba in recovering his Peshwaship.

The act of the Parliament of England passed in 1773 changed the constitution of the Company. The operation of the new constitution was ordained to commence in India after the 1st August, 1774. The presidencies of Bombay and Madras were placed under the Governor-General who was to be assisted by a Council of five members.

The Supreme Council condemned the treaty with Raghoba and denounced the support the Bombay Government had given to Raghoba (the infamous man) as unreasonable, impolitic, unjust and unauthorised. They enjoined the Bombay Council to cancel the treaty with Raghoba and withdraw the troops from assisting him. The Supreme Council entered into a separate treaty known as the Treaty of Purandhar in 1776. The Bombay Government referred this matter to the Court of Directors who sided with the Bombay Government.

THE LAST PESHWA

The story of the manner in which the Marathas have all along been treated by the British forms a black chapter in the Indian History. At the time when Marquess Wellesley landed in India Baji Rao was sitting on the Peshwa's masnad at Poona. He was destined to be the last of the Peshwas. The great Nana Farnavis was spending his days in activity. Disorder and confusion were rapidly setting in and there are reasons to suspect that the Europeans were mainly instrumental in bringing about this state of affairs in the Maratha Empire. Baji Rao neither possessed the administrative capacity and civil Government nor pluck and courage for military affairs. He proved to be a tool in the hands of Europeans for the destruction of the independence of the Marathas. It was to reduce the Marathas to the position of dependence in the British that Marquess Wellesley withdrew his resignation and stayed on in the country. He knew that the seed of his machination which he had sown was soon to be in fruit and so he changed his mind about to his retiring to his country. It would have been fortunate for the Marathas if Marquess Wellesley had never set his foot on the Indian soil or not changed his mind regarding his resignation. The

English were pulling the strings which brought the distraction and confusion among the Marathas.

The Peshwa concluded the ignoble Treaty of Bassein which sealed the doom of the independence of the Marathas; nay, it sounded the death-knell of the independence of India. This treaty was the thin end of the wedge introduced into the Maratha politics which had the effect of destroying the confederacy and thus bringing about the downfall of the Maratha Empire. This confederacy was dismembered and the wishes of the British were accomplished beyond their expectation. It deprived the Peshwa of the independence, and also deprived the remaining Maratha states of their freedom of action. The second Maratha War is one of the most despicable misdeeds in the history of British India. It was a war in which the Britishers were the aggressors and its consequence were fatal to the independence of the Indian states.

The Maratha confederacy in its palmiest days consisted of the Raja of Berar, Scindia, Holkar and the Gaekwad, all owning the Peshwa as their executive head. But when the British attempted to sow dissensions amongst them and used every art to arouse jealousy and hatred towards each other they succeeded in detaching Gaekwad from the confederacy. He was the first to join the British. The Peshwa was now merely a puppet in their hands. Holkar also played into their hands and Marquess Wellesley instructed the Commander-in-Chief to open a campaign of low intrigues and conspiracies against Scindia.

Marquess Wellesley set afoot intrigues against the Moghul Emperor of Delhi. He commenced his intrigues with him by raising false hopes in his breast. He was made to believe that he will again be placed at the head of the Empire of India and that the authority wrested from him by the Marathas would be restored to him by the English. The Delhi Emperor was deceived by Marquess Wellesley.

At that time the land of the Five Rivers was showing signs of military organisation, The Panjab has always played a most prominent part in the history of India. Every invader and foreign conqueror of India had necessarily to pass through the Punjab. The people had to bear the brunt of the attack of every ambitious foreign invader. The Sikhs were coming into existence as a martial people in India. At that time in the person of Raja Ranjit Singh the Sikhs possessed a leader who was coming into prominence by his distinguished military genius. The Sikhs of those days were a brave and war-like people. Had they thrown their lot with the Marathas they could have given much trouble to the

British. Marquess Wellesley set afoot intrigues and conspiracies with them against the Marathas. The rise of the Sikhs was due to the encouragement they received at the hands of the English. Wellesley encouraged the Sikhs to become a power. Those who consider the conduct of Ranjit Singh as pusillanimous for his never crossing swords with the British, and rather yielding to and carrying out their demands, should realize that his rise would have been impossible without their help and encouragement of the British.

The great battle of Assaye, so memorable in the history of India, and which has been described as a decisive one for it secured the establishment of the supremacy of the British, on a sound foundation, was fought on 23rd September, 1803. It was fought under most circumstances unfavourable to the Scindia. He was defeated on account of the military organisation being a faulty one and to lack of statesmanship. All the high posts in his army were filled with Europeans by his predecessor and he had to pay a very heavy penalty. They were not true to their salt and seized every opportunity to betray their master. It was this mistake of the Marathas which contributed to the success of the British. The treachery of the European officers brought about his downfall. General Lake the then Commander-in-Chief of India, boasted of a secret manner which consisted in bribing and corrupting officers and men in the employ of the Scindia and intriguing with them against their master. His successes in Northern India were to be accounted for in this manner of carrying on intrigues. He fed the minds of men with smooth, specious and false promises. The people of the Doab, the area that lies between the Rivers Ganges and Jumna, were not taken in. What specially inspired these people with hatred against the British was the indulgence of the latter in killing cows. Akbar had prohibited the Mohammedans from doing so. His successors had also followed in his footsteps in this matter. But the British polluted the sacred city of Muttra by killin cows, an animal held in reverence by the Hindus and which had not been killed there by any person within the memory of the oldest man living. Their feelings were outraged and they naturally looked to the independent Princes of India to deliver them from the bondage of the English.

Marquess Wellesley clearly discerned the fact that it was around Holkar that all his disaffected and discontented allies and dependants were rallying and that political expediency necessitated that Holkar should be crushed at all cost. To crush that Maratha chieftain, the Governor-General, however, did not rely on force

alone. He knew that the sword alone could not succeed and he resorted to fraud. He advocated and opened a campaign of intrigues against the Holkar. If ultimately Holkar did not succeed in getting the better of the English it was not due to any want of valour or courage on his part, it was not that he lacked in any qualities which go to make a valiant soldier or a distinguished general but his failure was due to the net of intrigues and conspiracies which had been woven round him. The servants of the Company had raised traitors in his camp and, for their selfish ends, they ruined their master.

Marquess Wellesley had to leave India for good before the beginning of August, 1805. In a way he was recalled, for his wars with the Marathas had swollen the debt of the East India Company to such an extent that the Directors were alarmed at his proceedings. The natives of England never spent a single farthing out of their own pockets in establishing their power in India. They came to India in the capacity of humble traders. They, as a nation of shopkeepers, wanted to make money by means fair and foul. He left the shores of India after heaping nothing but miseries on this country, and whose name is not associated with any act for which India would cherish his memory with gratitude. During his regime a crore of rupees, that were to be remitted to Great Britain, were held back and to this amount the commercial nation had been deprived of so much import from the colonies.

The second tenure of office of Lord Cornwallis was not even of three months' duration. He was not able to effect any reform in India. He died without attaining any of the objects for the accomplishment of which he had been sent out for a second time to India.

The rise of the Sikh monarchy in the Punjab under Ranjit Singh, was due to the break-up of the Maratha Empire, for in all probability there would have been no Sikh monarchy had not the Sikhs remained neutral or even afforded help to the English in a clandestine manner when the Marathas were in their death struggle with them. When Holkar discovered that he could not get any assistance from Ranjit Singh and other Sikh chiefs of the Panjab, he had no other alternative than that of coming to terms with the English. The second Maratha war unjustly deprived the Peshwa of his throne. Scindia, Raja of Berar and Holkar were most unjustly deprived of some of their most fertile provinces.

THE REVOLT AT VELLORE

On 10th July, 1806 the sepoys assembled at the main

guard and surrounded the residence of their commanding officer. He was mortally wounded. They tried to make short work of the English officers and men stationed there. It was a rehearsal or a forerunner of National Revolt in 1857. The Civil Servants of the Company attributed it to the absurd and foolish military measures, *i.e.*, not to mark the face to denote the caste or to wear ear-rings and to be clean shaven on the chin and to have uniform-sized moustaches, to wear shakos instead of their turbans. The men regarded these orders and attack on their religion. They hoisted the Mysore flag. There had also been trouble at Hyderabad.

FIRST LORD MINTO'S ADMINISTRATION

The British were then having a very critical time in India. The charm of their military supremacy was a thing of the past. They were the laughing-stock of all the independent States of India. A monstrous and disorganised state of society existed at the very seat of that Government to which the people looked for safety and protection. The inhabitants of the territories then under the administration of the British Company were groaning under the pressure of heavy taxation imposed on them. Not only did India pay for all the wars which enabled the British to establish their empire but all the surplus revenue of India was drained out of the country to pay dividends to the merchants constituting the East India Company. When Lord Minto arrived in India the finances of the Government were tottering under the burden imposed upon them by the Maratha wars. The British were in a critical situation during the latter half of the first decade of the 19th century. Their prestige as a military nation was at its lowest ebb. Their treasuries were empty and the public credit was shaken. Lord Minto and his predecessors had deliberately devised means to prevent the people from uniting on the assumption that in the miseries of the natives of India lay the strength of their European rulers, and it was, therefore, necessary to create distraction, disorder and confusion. Dacoits may have been deliberately let loose among them. Dacoities increased under the English Government, not only to a degree of which there seems to have been no example under the Native Government of India, but to a degree surpassing what was ever witnessed in any country in which law and Government could with any degree of propriety be said to exist. The crime of dacoits had increased greatly since the British administration of justice. There was no protection either of person or property. It was the policy of the Government of those days not to protect the people against the dacoits, for the prosperity and

welfare and consequent strength of the people meant danger to the alien, unsympathetic and selfish rulers of the land. This was the state of affairs in India after over half a century's administration of the country by the servants of the East India Company. There are reasons to believe that Europeans sent emissaries to the states and principalities of India to create distraction and confusion and disorder in them in order to weaken them and to make them an easy prey for the British. The services of the Pindaries were utilized to bring about this miserable state of affairs in the Maratha States. They were in the pay of the Company and they were bound not to molest or insult the British but after some time they commenced raids in the provinces of British India. The Directors told Lord Minto that they were not averse to the introduction of Christianity but they did not like any imprudent and injudicious attempt to introduce it by method which imitated other religious prejudices.

The servants of the East India Company came out to this country as birds of prey and passage to shake the pagoda tree and amass filthy lucre and then return home loaded with their booty to play the Nawab there. Anything which touched their pockets made them indignant and turn against those who ventured to do so. Lord Minto wanted to make retrenchment in all departments of the state and thus the British officers burst into open mutiny at various places in Madras Presidency. To conciliate the mutineers and to redress their grievances, every effort was made and the whole thing was put an end to in no time.

MARQUESS OF HASTINGS

His rule forms a very conspicuous sign-post in the history of British India. He trampled the rights of princes and peoples of Hindustan under foot and succeeded by means of fraud and force in depriving Indians of their independence and chain of slavery round their necks. It was by bleeding Indians that England succeeded in raising money to intrigue with other European powers against and to fight with Napoleon. Before the establishment of British rule, India was the greatest manufacturing country in the world. Her cotton fabrics used to be imported into every country of the world. It was to buy her cotton fabrics which used to be imported that the European nations made their way to India. It was by destroying this cotton manufacture of India that England succeeded in raising money. In order to secure the cotton manufacture for herself. England forbade the import of Indian fabrics into England. She forced the East India Company

to lower all the duties hitherto levied on English goods entering India. She thus flooded India with cheap cottons and brought about the ruin of Indian weavers and Indian cotton manufacturers. It is a melancholy instance of the wrong done to India by the British. British goods were forced upon her without paying any duty, and foreign manufacturers employed the arm of political injustice to keep down and ultimately strangle a competitor with whom he could not have contended on equal terms. By destroying Indian cotton manufactures the English established her market in India. England was loaded with a heavy debt and the resources of golden India were indented upon to liquidate this debt. It was the policy of the English Ministry to extend the boundaries of their empire to strangle the weaving industry of India and thus to create a market for English goods and ultimately enrich England.

THE CHARTER OF 1813

India had been conquered before too but none inflicted such miseries on her as the English who are a nation of shopkeepers. They desired to become shopkeepers in India also and, therefore, opened shops in this country. The commercial character of the British rule in its present form dates from the renewal of the Company's charter in 1813. True it is that the East India Company was a trading Corporation. But they were not so much the importers of English manufactured goods into India as exporters of Indians goods to Europe. The deliberate destruction of Indian industries, therefore, dates from 1813 when the English goods were forced on India. Since that date has commenced India's degradation. This renewal of the charter was disastrous to India economically and morally. England had to destroy the industries of the Indians in order to oblige them to purchase English goods. It is a pity that the Indians of those days did not see through the designs of the English. If a Swadeshi with boycott had been started at that time, its success would have been as great as it had been in America on the eve of the Revolution. But unfortunately Indians had been so successfully hypnotised by the English that they believed them to be their benefactors and that whatever they did was for the benefit of India.

Next to the destruction of the Indian industries, the greatest wrong which the Charter of 1813 inflicted on India was the permission granted to the Europeans to freely resort to India.

LORD AMHERST

To meet the expenses of the various wars and camapaigns he had been engaged in he made the Indian Princes, whether reigning or pensioners, advance him money. The King of Oudh paid one crore and 50 lacs for 2 years, Baiza Bae 80 lacs, Raja of Nagpur 5 lacs and so on. Lord Amherst proceeded to Delhi on 15th February, 1827. He had an interview with the Emperor on the 17th. The latter was seated on Peacock throne and Lord Amherst took his seat on a state chair on front of it on the right and sat at right angles to His Majesty. This conduct was considered so derogatory by His Majesty that he despatched Raja Ram Mohan Roy to England. There was at that time, in India, no awakening of the national consciousness nor any sentiment of patriotism. This made the rise of the British possible in India.

LORD WILLIAM BENTINCK

The general result of Lord William's Government was poor—very poor. It was a Government by professions, which began and ended in words because the main principle of the British Indian Government was to profit themselves and their masters at the expense of the people of India. The commerce and manufactures of the country were daily deteriorated by the vexatious system of internal duties. Their impoverishment had been progressive, for while the evils continued in full force the revenue screw had scarcely been relaxed even by half a thread out of the many of which it was composed.

The policy which Bentinck pursued in the political or foreign departments was such as paved the way to the annexation of the states of several independent and feudatory princes of Hindustan and brought them under the direct administration of the East India Company. The manner in which he treated those princes was not calculated to make the relations between them and the English pleasant. Bentinck intentionally insulted the Emperor of Delhi and he was the author of the plot which had for its object the extinction of the Maratha principality of Gwalior. He was also scheming to absorb and annex other principalities of Central India.

Bentinck treated Maharaja Ranjit Singh in a very contemptuous manner and a conspiracy was laid during his regime to subvert the Sikh Raj.

The measures introduced by him were best calculated to make the Indians miserable and to keep them in subjection. His great

aim was to anglicize and denationalize the Indians. He did not conceal it because he came to believe that the anglicising of India would be of material advantage to England. With this object, among others, he tried his best to introduce English as the Court language of India. It was done with the deliberate intention to undermine the religious and social life of India. He did all that lay in his power to give impetus to the settlement and colonisation in India of his co-religionists and compatriots. The free resort of Englishmen to India would lead, he thought, to the anglicizing of the Indians which would be advantageous to England. His foreign policy was aggressive and his domestic policy destructive of the best interests of the children of the soil.

THE CHARTER OF 1833

The interests ofthe people of England are diametrically opposed to those of the people of this country. Their interests and our interests clash. Their can't be and is not a community of interests between the English and the Indian. The Charter Act of 1833 was more advantageous to the people of England than to those of India. This Act intensified the impetus to the exploitation of India. It encouraged the conspiracy to annihilate the then existing native principalities and to violate the most sacred and solemn promises which the British had entered into with the Princes of India. It circumscribed the liberties enjoyed by the Indian people and made their lot heavy and it saddled them with the imposition of new taxes. It was after passing this Act that the Company deliberately took the step which had for its object the annexation of all the Indian States by any means fair or foul with the power.

LORD MACAULAY

Lord Macaulay largely contributed both directly and indirectly to the genesis of the present unrest in the country. He entertained a supreme contempt for every thing Indian. By making English the medium of instruction he wished to denationalise Indians and to undermine the social and religious institutions of India.

For nearly 20 years the various Britishers who filled the office of the Law member did absolutely no work but drew, during that period, about 40 lacs from the Indian revenue. If the proverb of the mountain in labour bringing forth a mouse is applicable to anything in this world it is to the labour of the Law Commission. The mouse which was after all brought forth was the Indian Penal Code. Of late years the genius to which the

mouse belongs is credited with the transmission of plague. This code has proved the propagator and transmitter of a sort of moral plague in India.

LORD ELLENBOROUGH'S ADMINISTRATION

Lord Ellenborough said :

" No man in his senses would propose to place the political and military power in India in the hands of the Indians.

" Our very existence in India depends upon the exclusion of natives from military and political power in that country. We had won the Empire of India by the sword and must preserve it by the same means."

He carried out a policy of robbing millions of Indians of their independence and imposing the yoke of the rule of England on their necks.

The British, since a long time, had been very eagerly looking forward to the day when they would become masters of the hoarded wealth of Maharaja Ranjit Singh as well as of his dominion. To achieve this end they had been intriguing and conspiring against the Punjab. The British instigated all the disturbances in the Punjab in order to weaken it and then to easily annex it. Lord Ellenborough is responsible for creating disorder in the Sikh Raj though he did not remain in India to witness the contest with the Sikhs. Ellenborough was no friend of the Mohammedans and consequently could not have been of the Moghul Emperor of Delhi. He stopped paying homage to him. He had contemplated further steps to lower the dignity of his Emperor. He annexed the Mohammedan state of Sind, and had his eyes on the Nizam's dominion. He humiliated the Moghul Emperor. He did not touch the King of Oudh because it was not convenient for him to kill the goose that laidthe golden eggs.

LORD DALHOUSIE

Lord Dalhousie was the last maker of the British Indian Empire for, after him no other portion had been dyed red. He was unscrupulous to the extreme and always acted on the principle that the end justifies the means. The annexations of the different independent states and territories of India during the reign of Dalhousie were brought about by means of show of force, bad faith, by the violation of all treaties and fraud and chicanery. Lord Dalhousie had no compunction of conscience in inflicting miseries on the royal houses and people of India. From the

appointment of this man there can be no doubt that the East India authorities intended to provoke hostilities and thus to hasten the annexation of the Punjab—an object which was so dear to their hearts. Sir Henry Sleeman wrote to one of his friends, "Things are not going so well as could be wished in the Punjab and it appears to me that we have been there committing an error of the same kind that we committed in Afghanistan—that is taking upon ourselves the most odious part of the executive administration." The people of Multan were contented, happy and prosperous under their own system of Government. But the Western diplomats of Christian persuasion had to provide for their own kith and kin and, therefore, they would not tolerate the existence of Mul Raj. Under his governorship and of his father, Multan had become so rich that the Britishers could not resist the temptation of appropriating its wealth for themselves and they thought they could squeeze out more from it by oppressing its inhabitants than did Mul Raj or his father. Mul Raj had himself been regarded by the British authorities as a very good Indian ruler and he maintained excellent order in Multan. So for selfish ends Multan was marked out as the first victim. The Lahore Darbar, under pressure of the British, induced Mul Raj to resign and one Kahan Singh Man was appointed as Governor of Multan on an annual salary of Rs. 30,000. He was to be Governor in name only and the real authority was vested in the English officers who accompanied him. He was not to do anything without consulting them.

Mul Raj and his followers, animated by the spirit of patriotism and love of liberty, resisted this move of the British, because he was not willing to sell himself and his country into bondage. There was an armed revolt. The British were determined to swallow up the Punjab. The British Resident at Lahore did all he could, to further exasperate the Sikhs and wound their feelings and susceptibilities by his very high-handed proceedings and without any evidence he considered the Queen mother Rani Jinda to be implicated in the Multan affair and took pleasure in practising refined cruelties on her. She was banished out of her state and kept a prisoner at Benares. The Maharani was subjected to much persecution. It was designed and calculated to exasperate the Sikhs. She was respected as mother of the Khalsa and hence the Sikhs deeply resented the oppression, tyranny and violence with which the widow of the great Maharaja Ranjit Singh was being treated. The British broke the treaty by imprisoning the Maharani, the mother of her people. Such a treatment was considered highly objectionable and disgraceful. The British paid no heed to all these voices of

protests and warnings. They were intoxicated with power and it was their policy to exasperate the Sikhs and provoke hostilities in order to deprive them of all their independence and earthly possessions. The Sikh Governor of the Hazara Province was being ill-treated and insulted by the British and he considered that his as well as country's honour and safety lay in driving the English out of the Punjab.

The second treaty forced on the Lahore Darbar in December, 1846 left all power in the hands of the British Resident. The members of the Council of Regency were intended to be mere puppets. Indian Army was being replaced by the British one and yet not a single British soldier was sent to Multan to restore peace there. Sher Singh who was sent to Multan was not successful in his attempt to coerce Mul Raj. The Sikh troops under him deserted him and joined Mul Raj because they were entirely disgusted with the treatment meted out to the Queen-mother. Sher Singh's father was being disgracefully ill-treated by the British officers and hence Sher Singh had to leave Multan to join his father.

The Sikhs as a body had joined out of their common hatred of the English whom they would have succeeded in driving out of their country but the English patted the Mussalmans against the Sikhs and it was with their support that the English succeeded in defeating the Sikhs. It is a deplorable fact that the Mohammedans joined with the English to subvert the Sikh Raj. It was in October, 1848 that the Sikh Sirdars of the Punjab made up their minds to combine together to make the Khalsaraj independent of the English. The British forces were defeated at Chillianwala. This was the last battle won by the Sikhs ; but unfortunately the Sikhs did not take full advantage of it.

At Gujrat took place the last fight which crushed all hopes of Sikh independence. It is quite probable that there was some treachery in the camp of Sher Singh which made him lose the battle of Gujrat and surrender himself and the Sikh troops unconditionally to the English. Thus ended the Second Sikh War in which the Sikhs fought very bravely but had at last to surrender themselves to the English. Their national independence became a thing of the past and they became the subjects of the English.

To keep the people of the Punjab in subjection Lord Dalhousie adopted the policy of grinding them to poverty, place the iron heel on their necks and rule them without any show of justice or mercy. The natives of England were afraid to annex

the Punjab because they apprehended trouble from the Punjabees who are of a martial disposition. The annexation could not be justified from any moral consideration but Lord Dalhousie and his advisers had bidden farewell to all the moral considerations and annexed Punjab because it served their interests to do so. Among other reasons for annexation, was this important one, *viz.*, it grew, cotton. On 29th March, 1849, the doom of the Sikh Raj was sealed.

During Lord Dalhousie's tenure of office as Governor-General of India only two wars were fought which resulted in the annexation of the Punjab and portion of Burma ; but in wiping out the independent existence of many other principalities and states of India, he did not appeal to the sword. To accomplish his object he had to resort to fraud and not to force.

' Lapse ' has a peculiar meaning in the history of India. It is a dreadful and an appalling word. It pursues the victim beyond the grave. Its significance, in his eyes, is nothing short of eternal condemnation. It meant that those Indian States who entered into an alliance with the English were to lose their very existence at the sweet will of the English.

There is not a single prince, state or potentate, great or small in India, with whom they have come in contact, whom the English did not sell outright.

The descendants of those princes with whose help the English succeeded in establishing their power in this country were very shamefully treated and on their death their principalities annexed in the teeth of existing treaties on the ground of alleged ' want of heirs '. This sort of annexation was given the name of 'Lapse'.

The three Maratha principalities of Satara, Nagpur, Jhansi and four minor ones were thus annexed in the regime of Dalhousie. The statesmen of England who were entrusted with the Government of India lacked all sense of justice and humanity when dealing with people and princes of India. Is not the frequency of deaths without heirs, among Indian Kings, when Dalhousie announced his policy of annexation of lapse, suggestive of foul play ?

Of course, it was the intention of Dalhousie to annex the whole dominion of the Nizam to the British Government and the canfiscation of Berar was meant to be a preliminary step to the introduction of the thin end of the wedge into the body politic of Nizam. But Lord Dalhousie failed to do so because of the superior diplomacy and statecraft of Nizam's ministers.

The English had been long casting their wistful eyes on Oudh with greed. They were coveting it. Without annexation the exploitation was not possible. Hence the absorption of this kingdom was deemed of primary importance by the English. The people and the princes were against their territories being annexed. They determined to spend Rs. 15 lacs a year to prevent annexation by bribery and agitation. Pamphlets appealing to Mussalmans to protect their province were largely circulated.

Some of the Britishers in the employ of the Nawab wrote books inventing alleged acts of oppression and cruelty of the king. Finally it was annexed. It was the last principality in India that was annexed to the dominion of East India Company. The rise of British supremacy may be said to have reached its last stage with the administration of Dalhousie. His acquisitions by fraud, force and bad faith were meant to be the last achievements of the English in empire-building in India.

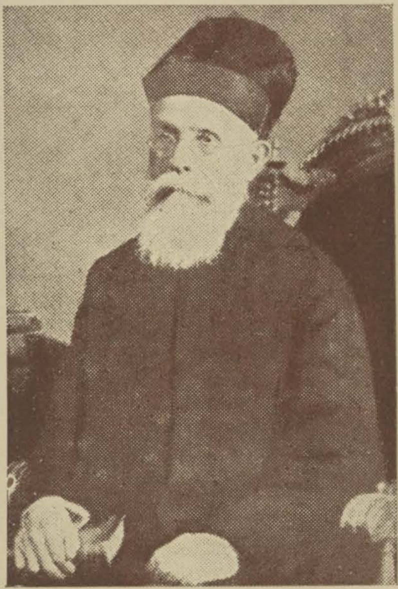
In the Charter of 1853 much stress was laid on public works which meant railway construction, education and spread of Christianity. The railways would benefit England and its shopkeepers. Education would anglicise and denationalise Indians and make them loyal and subservient to the British. The spread of Christianity had also a political motive behind it.

CHAPTER VI

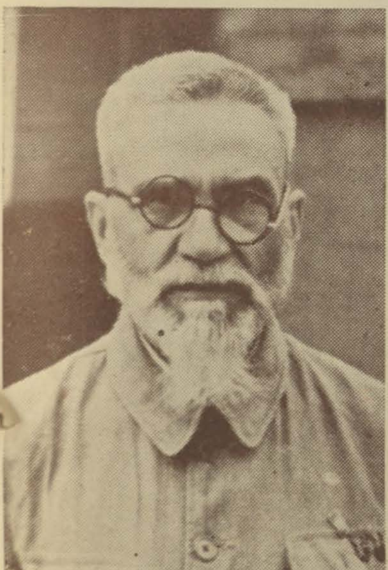
The National Revolt

Canning who succeeded Dalhousie was destined to be the last nominee of the East India Company to that high appointment. It was obvious that the high-handed manner in which Dalhousie had conducted the affairs of India did not bode good to the country. It did not require the vision of a prophet to see the cloud on the political horizon of India, not bigger than a man's hand but which growing larger and larger might, at last, threaten to burst and overwhelm India with a disaster. Lord Canning saw it and said so in England, and when he was appointed Governor-General in 1856 his prediction came to be fulfilled in 1857. India seathed with terrible unrest and the people were very much discontented and dissatisfied with the English regime. Deep-seated agrarian discontent all over northern India added fuel to the fire. Just as fifty years before, the revolt at Vellore was due to the English riding roughshod over the religious and caste prejudices, usages and customs of Indians, so after half a century when they had brought more territory of India under their rule they considered it no longer necessary to pay any heed to the feelings and sentiments of the Hindus and Mohammedans. Christianity and Christian missionaries were being openly patronised by the Company's Government. The Indian people naturally felt alarmed that the Christian Government meant to destroy their religious and social institutions. They were also disgusted with the way in which the English were treating Indians. The Anglo-Indians of the last century were as cruel as possible. Vast fortunes acquired in the inland trade had been obtained in a most tyrannical and opressive conduct that was ever known dictated by them otherwise they were flogged or put in jails. The English were so unpopular that when the Governor-General went to any place it was deserted. A cold-blooded treachery was the established policy of

He laid the Foundation of the
NATION'S CONGRESS



Dadabhoy Naoroji



Raja Mahendra Partap

The passion for India
drove them to exile



S. Ajit Singh

the authorities. Princes were betrayed into a war with each other and one of them having succeeded in overcoming his antagonist was then dethroned for some alleged misdemeanour. Always some muddied stream was at hand as a pretext for official wolves. Dependent chiefs possessing coveted lands were impoverished by exorbitant demands for tribute. The most strident challenge to the British was the Wahabi movement which advocated a return to the Holy Quran. The political jehad of the Wahabis emphasised the Muslim community of India as a religio-political unit. The necessity of co-operation between the Muslims and the Hindus, in the face of a common enemy, was very strongly advocated. Meanwhile, the Muslims nursed with passion the injured pride at being ousted from the position of rulers, and in their hatred of the alien, embittered by other grievances, fought gallantly.

Grievous salt monopoly, pitiless taxation, cunning despotism were the outstanding features of the administration. The Indians were so afraid of the English that they would run into the woods at their sight. The Government of the East India Company was tainted from the very first with mighty vices and these became more flagrant as time gave to the various abuses the immunity or even the authority derived from prescription. For generations after generations the great aim and object of the servants of the Company from the high civil and military functionaries downwards was to squeeze as large as possible a fortune of the country as quickly as might be and turn their backs upon it for ever so soon as that object had been attained and the last golden harvest had been shaken down from the pagoda tree. The English hurt the Indians with scorpions. None but the wholly blind could assert or even effect to believe that the English rule in India was popular among the inhabitants. It is beyond question that mere political reasons helped a military rising to spread among large sections of the people and converted into a genuine political insurrection.

This was the state of affairs in India when both the Hindus and Mussalmans revolted against the English administration and which the Englishman called 'Mutiny' but which in reality was a national revolution started and carried on with the sole object of liberating India. A brief description of its causes and course of events follows.

The younger generation should carefully read, learn and digest this history. The history of this tremendous revolution has never been written in a precise and accurate form. Most extra-

ordinary, misleading and unjust ideas about that revolutionary war are current. Many of the English authors have written the history in a biased spirit. This revolution is generally ascribed to various temporary and accidental causes like greasing of cartridges or the annexation of Oudh. The great principles that moved the people to start this revolution are Swatantrata, Swaraj, Swadharm and Swadhinta. In these lies the root principle of this revolutionary war. It was the country's desperate bid for freedom. It was a determined upheaval against the political supremacy of the British. It was the first really large-scale popular outbreak aganist the British rule. It was a national revolt against slavery. The Muslims and the Hindus had joined in a mighty effort to shake off the shackles which the British had put on their hands and feet. It was a declaration of Independence. In 1857 doctors of Islam particularly rose to protect their religion dearer to them than their life, when it was being attacked in a cunning, dangerous and destructive manner and to break asunder the chains of slavery and to acquire Swaraj. It was to win back the liberty wrested away by fraud and trickery, by subtle cheating and by conspiracies and underhand measures. It brought together an alliance of all the forces in India ever united against a foreign conqueror. The seed of this revolution is in this holy idea. 'The protection of religion and country.' In the proclamation issued at Bareilly we find "Hindus and Mohammedans of India! Arise, brethren Arise! Of all the gifts of God the most gracious is that of Swaraj. Will the oppressive demon who has robbed us of it by deceit be able to keep it away from us for ever? Can such an act against the will of God stand for ever? No, no. The English have committed so many atrocities that the cup of their sins is already full. To add to it they have got now the wicked desire to destroy our holy religion. Are you going to remain idle even now? God does not wish that you should remain so, for He has inspired the hearts of Hindus and Mohammadans with the desire to turn the English out of this country. And by the grace of God and your valour they will soon be so completely defeated, and in this our Hindustan there will not remain even the least trace of them. In our army the differences of small and great shall be forgotten and equality shall be the rule, for all who draw the sword in this holy war for the defence of religion are equally glorious. They are brethren. There is no rank among them. Therefore I again say to all my Hindi brethren, 'Arise and jump into the battlefield for this divinely ordained and supreme duty'." What stronger evidence is needed to prove that Indian warriors drew their swords at the time for Swadharma and Swaraj believing it to be the duty of every

man to fight for the rights given to man by God? These tremendous' heroic shouts 'Swadharma, Swaraj, Swadesh and Swatantra' proclaim to the world the character of the Revolution in which 'all who draw the sword are equally glorious." Swaraj without Swadharma is despicable and Swadharma without Swaraj is powerless. These two are connected as means and end. It is beyond question that political reasons were the main cause of the spread of this revolution. The bad faith and earth-hunger of the foreign rulers had poisoned the minds of the people against the British.

Afterwards when Delhi was besieged by the English and the war was at its height the Emperor issued another proclamation addressing the Indians thus, "Why has God given us wealth, land and power? They are not for individual pleasure but they are given for the holy object of defence of our country and religion. He who does not attempt to acquire Swaraj, he who sits silent in slavery, he is an atheist and hater of religion. Therefore arise for Swadharma and acquire Swaraj." It was not only the sepoy who rose in revolt. It was a combination of military grievance, national hatred, and religious feeling against the English occupation of India. The Indian princes and people joined this movement. The Mohammedans and the Hindus forgot their religious antipathies to join against the English. The quarrel about the greased cartridges was but the chance spark flung in among all the combustible material. It was the rising of a whole people against the British domination. It was a national and religious war and those who participated in it were noble patriots who fought for a good cause, *i.e.*, for their religion and their King and their motherland, for Swadharma, Swaraj and Swadesh. In this campaign figured, brave, picturesque leaders like Tantia Topi and Rani of Jhansi whose memory is still fondly cherished by political India.

For a hundred years the English had been oppressing and maltreating the country. The Company gave nothing but 'Sweet words of praise.' General Wellesley would drive the wounded sepoys to the mouth of guns instead of sending them to hospital. The Indian army was very much upset by the treatment meted out to them by the British.

The danger to the independence of India was first perceived by Nana Farnavis of Poona and Hyder Ali of Mysore. From that onwards the presence of this danger began to be felt at least by the Princes of India. The seeds of discontentment had gone deep before Dalhousie landed in India. Rajas and Maharajas, Nawabs and Kings deprived of their kingdoms by the English were very much

in anger. The sepoys were secretly chafing with rage and hatred. The question was not whether the Company's rule should be good or bad but the only question that used to be asked, all over the country, was whether the rule should exist at all. All the vested interests in the religious and political domain had wagered their fate on the uprising. It was a War of Independence. In 1857 a Fatwa in favour of a holy war against the British was promulgated with solemn point. For long the Muslims felt that their religion and culture were in danger. They found their prestige gone, laws replaced, language destroyed, and their education ruined. Their pride was humbled. They resented the loss of supremacy and were determined to destroy the British rule in India as it was ruining their religion, culture, civilization and country. The arrogance of the British was very much resented and there was much hatred in the minds of the people against the rulers.

Lord Dalhousie forced the issue by his policy of annexation and extending the Empire. Lord Dalhousie had come to reduce the whole of India to a dead level. The same Gaddi on which Shivaji was crowned was broken to pieces by Dalhousie. He annexed Nagpur which yeilded an annual income of nearly five lacs. The East India Company disregarded treaties and the laws of the country in order to satisfy their lust for land and money. Conquest by all possible means was the guiding motto of the British.

NANA SAHIB

He was a son of Madhavrao and on 7th June 1827 Baji Rao formally placed him on his lap and adopted him. At this time Nana was only 2½ years old. He thus became the heir presumptive to the throne of the Peshwas. This was not an ordinary thing. In 1851 the Peshwa Baji Rao II died. This man lost his own kingdom and helped to ruin the kingdom of other kings. He was a pensioner of the East India Company. He helped this Company with a loan of 50 lacs out of his savings. He spent money out of his own pocket and sent one thousand infantry and one thousand cavalry to assist the English when they went to war with the Sikhs in the Punjab. The Marathas took the kingdom of Sikhs and the Sikhs captured the kingdom of Marathas in order that the English might trample over the corpses of both. Baji Rao bequeathed all the rights of succession and powers of the Peshwa to his adopted son Nana Sahib. The English Government announced that Nana Sahib had no right whatever to the pension of eight lacs. Nana Sahib sent Azimullah Khan to England as his faithful ambassador. He was one of the important and memorable revolu-

tionaries of 1857. He was one of those keen intellects and grand minds who conceived the idea of this War of Independence. He was very poor by birth. He rose gradually on the strength of his merits to be the trusted adviser of Nana Sahib.. The East India Company's Directors gave him this cold and stiff reply. "We entirely approve of the decision of the Governor-General that the adopted son of Baji Rao has no claim whatever to his father's pension."

Nana had made Brahmvarta his home after the demise of his father. He was well-educated and had the refinement of culture. He took great interest in politics and political affairs. He used to closely study the ever changing affairs of great nations and for that purpose carefully followed the English press. He was the incarnation of vengeance of the land of Hind. He had a noble and patriotic heart.

The following local grievances also fanned the flame of hatred against the British :

OUDH (AYODHYA)

In was in 1764 that the relations between the Company and the Ruler of Oudh were first established. Since then the servants of the Company had been steadily trying to usurp the fertile land of Ayodhya. They compelled the Nawab of Oudh to keep the English regiments in his pay for protecting him and they obtained from him in return Rs. 16 lakhs per annum as subsidy for these regiments. They suggested to the Nawab to replace all the Indian army by English regiments which would be a valuable step towards the effectual protection of the principality. The Company deprived him at once and for ever of a territory yielding a net revenue of about 2 crores of rupees and forced him to accept the services of the extensive army of English soldiers.

In the year 1847 Wajid Ali Shah succeeded to the throne of Oudh. This new Nawab determined from the first to destroy the influence of the English which was 'killing' the life out of the state. The English were keen in crushing such an independent-minded ruler and Lord Dalhousie wrote to the Resident of Oudh to force the Nawab to sign a document that he was perfectly willing to give over his dominions to the Company. The Nawab flatly refused to sign such a document. The Nawab was overwhelmed with grief and began to weep. The British army insolently setting aside the Nawab's authority entered Lucknow and took forcible possession of the whole place including his

palace. The zenanas were looted, the Begums were insulted and the Nawab was hurled from the throne.

GREASING OF CARTRIDGES

To add fuel to this raging fire, orders were issued to the Indian sepoys that they should use the new cartridges. A certain kind of fat had to be used for the greasing of the paper cones of cartridges so that they might be smooth and well lubricated and sepoys were ordered to bite off this greasy portion with their teeth.

One day a Brahman sepoy at Dum Dum near Calcutta was going to the military barracks with his lota full of water. At that time a scavenger came and asked for a drink from the lota. The Brahman refused saying that his lota will be rendered unclean by the lips of a low caste man. The scavenger replied, 'Enough of caste pride now. Do you not know that soon you would bite with your teeth fat of the cow and the fat of the pig. The new cartridges are being expressly greased with these materials for this purpose.' When he heard this the Brahman was shocked, his mind reeled and he ran wild with excitement towards the camp and all the sepoys collected around him. Suspicion arose that the English had arranged a cunning plot to defile their religion by greasing the cartridges with cow's and pig's fat. The Bengal army was one great brotherhood in which all the members felt and acted in union.

So the sepoys determined that whether they had to use these cartridges or not they would not rest quiet until they had destroyed their political slavery and this dependence which was at the root of all these troubles. What religion can a slave have? The first steps towards Dharma is to be a free man of a free country. Roused with such sentiments every sepoy in India began to sharpen his sword for Swadesh, Swadharma and Swarajya. Azimullah Khan, the faithful messenger of Nawab Wajid Ali Shah on his return from England, made a tour of Europe and he stayed some time in Russia. English historians have a suspicion that Azimullah had gone there to ascertain whether Russia would pursue the war against England in Asia, and if possible to enter into an offensive and defensive alliance with it. When the trumpet of National War had been blown, all people openly declared that Czar of Russia and his army were ready to fight against the English. He was trying to put through some diplomatic scheme in Egypt also. When Azimullah returned to India he found that in their own Hindustan the people had been reduced to the status

of slaves. The Swaraj was merely a mirage. The Indians had lost their natural rights of liberty. All the attempts to win back the country and its independence by conciliation, by money and by appeal had so far failed, hence he gave a call for war. "If you are killed you will get a heaven, if you win you will enjoy the fruits of your labour."

The Maratha Chief Nana's first desire was also to drive the English out by unsheathing the sword and thus get independence and then to nurture and protect Swadesh under the united authority of all Indian princes. His programme was to create a united front to make India free and by removing internecine warfare to establish the rule of united states of India which would thus take its rightful place in the council of the Free Nations of earth.

Two things were necessary for the success of the war that was to be waged to win back freedom. The first thing was to create a passionate desire in Hindustan for this ideal, the second was to make all the country rise, simultaneously for the purpose of achieving it.

THE CAMPAIGN

A little before 1856 Nana began to send missionaries all over India to initiate people in his political ideal. He also sent tried and able men to the different princes from Delhi to Mysore to fill their minds with the glorious ideal of the United States of India and to induce them to join the Revolution. It was in the Dewan-i-Khas of Delhi more than on any other Darbar that the seeds of revolution began to take root. The Emperor and his clever and determined Begum had already decided that this last opportunity of regaining glory should not to be allowed to go by and if dying was the only alternative then they should die the death which would only befit an Emperor and an Empress.

Mohammedan mothers used to ask their children to pray that the English should be destroyed. All the peoples were inspired with the hope that when once the Raj was won all power and all authority would remain in their own hands. In every house in Delhi disaffection only awaited a spark which should explode everything up. The Wazir of Oudh was as much absorbed in this dangerous conspiracy near Calcutta as Nawab Sahib himself was. Confidental agents were sent by him in the garbs of Fakirs or Sanyasis to preach sedition to the sepoys. The sepoys would take the water of the Ganges in their hands or would swear by the Holy Quran that they would live only to achieve the destruction of the English rule. Everywhere was this hatred of

slavery and the desire for Swaraj manifested. "My religion is dying, my country is dying, my people have been reduced to a condition worse than that of dogs."

National songs were composed to educate the people about their past glory and their present fall. A prophecy that emblazoned the star of future hope and encouraged all was heard in the land. The secret organization of the Revolution was now growing at tremendous rate. To link together the innumerable groups of the various provinces which were working separately, men were employed to travel about secretly and letters were not used and if used at all they were written in the Code languages. To supply the sinews of war to the secret organization, the Sahukars of Lucknow, the palaces of Nana and Wazir Ali Naqi Khan, the Mahal of Delhi and other heads of the Revolutionary Party were sufficient. The police were found to be in sympathy with the people.

When every arrangement was complete and the secret machinery of the Revolution was set in motion it was necessary to arrange that the various 'activities' should be synchronised. With this purpose, in Bengal a messenger of the Revolutionaries went to the Cantonments taking a red lotus in his hand. He would give the red lotus into the hands of the Chief Indian Officer in the first regiment. He would pass it on to another, the red lotus would be passing from one sepoy to another. That was enough. Without a whisper or a word the messenger would pass on like an arrow from sepoy to sepoy. In this way the whole organization became of one opinion and was fully ready for revolution with blood. The red lotus was the final emblem of the organization.

Nana reached Lucknow on 1st of April. This infused the whole city of Lucknow with an almost uncontrollable joy and excitement. Nana personally visited the leaders of the principal towns. Delhi, Amballa, Lucknow, Kashi, etc., and he drew up a clear programme of the future campaign. At this time a strange band of secret messengers were going at express speed throughout the length and breadth of India to prepare the people for the great day, *i.e.*, chupatees were in circulation. These spoke only to those it meant to speak to. It gave the message "speed of Angel of Revolution, speed on, the mother goes forth to war. Run on, run all save her."

Of all the marvellous incidents connected with the Revolution of 1857 the most marvellous was the secrecy with which the vast movement was organized. It is difficult to find a parallel to the capacity for secret organization displayed by these leaders like

Nana Sahib, Moulvi Ahmed Shah, Vazir Ali Naqi Khan who perfected their organization under the very nose of the English. Mangal Pendey was a Brahman by birth but he had taken up the duties of a Kashtriya and he was a valiant soldier and into his heart had entered the idea of the freedom of the country and it had electrified his blood. The swords of martyrs are never in the scabbard. Panday became uncontrollable and he at once loaded his gun and jumped on the parade ground and shouted, "Rise ye brethren, rise, why do you hold back? Come and rise. I bind you by the oath of your religion! Come let us rush forth on the treacherous enemies for the sake of our freedom." The Sergeant Major ordered the sepoys to avert Pandey. None did so and a bullet from Pandey killed the officer. The Colonel came and ordered Mangal Pandey's arrest. The sepoys said, "We would not touch a hair of this sacred Brahman." When European soldiers came to arrest him he turned the gun towards his own breast and fell down wounded on the parade ground. He was tried before a court martial. His brave deed was done through devotion to a high and noble principle. His sword came out of its scabbard to defend the country and religion, thinking alike of victory and defeat. His bravery as well as patriotism are worthy of the highest praise. He was condemned to be hanged. He was carried to the scaffold on 8th April. He walked with a steady step and ascended the scaffold in a very bold and dignified manner and his free soul ascended to Heaven! He was the first martyr of the Revolution. His blood was the source of the river of martyrdom. He gave not only his blood but his sacred name also to the Revolution.

Thousands of the sepoys willingly laid down their arms like some unholy object and broke with pleasure the chains of slavery.

If the whole of Hindustan had risen simultaneously on the 31st of May, India would not have waited longer than 1857 to win its independence.

But the premature rising at Meerut benefited the English very much. The Meerut sepoys had unknowingly put their brethren in unforeseen confusion by warning the enemy beforehand.

DELHI

All the sepoys at Delhi had become restless but the Emperor and the Empress had restrained them. In the Royal palace of Delhi sepoys and townsmen were crowding together shouting 'victory to the Emperor.' Thus came into the hands of the army of the

people the Emperor and the Empress, and the leaders of the sepoys held a conference with them as to future plans.

The Emperor decided openly to take the side of the Revolutionaries. The leaders of the sepoys stood before the Emperor and said, "Hazur, the English are defeated at Meerut. Delhi is in your hands and all the sepoys and people from Peshawar up to Calcutta are awaiting your orders. The whole of Hindustan has arisen to break the chains of English slavery and acquire God-given independence." The Emperor said to the sepoys, "I have no treasury and you will get no pay." The sepoys replied. "We will loot the English treasuries all over India and lay them at your feet." Hundreds of the citizens of Delhi took up any arms they could get hold of, and joined the Revolutionaries. During the five days that the storm was raging in Delhi it was proclaimed that Hindus and Mohammedans are not rivals, not conquerors and conquered but brethren. The power of the people started the movement to destroy the chains of foreign slavery. The news of the liberation of Delhi travelled with lightening rapidity and by its suddenness absolutely staggered for a moment Indians as well as foreigners. Lord Canning issued a proclamation and ordered it to be posted in every town village, "We had no intention to interfere with your religious and caste affairs . We have not the least intention of insulting your religions. It is a sin on your part who have eaten the salt of the Company to rise against it." But who paid any heed to such proclamations ? These were treated with contempt and ridicule.

THE PUNJAB

The Punjab remained in English hands because the Sikh Sardars sided with the English. Even if they had been indifferent the English could not have retained the Punjab for a single day. The Revolutionaries spared no pains to bring over the Sikhs to their side but the Sikh Sardars who were idle and cowardly became the playthings of English and did not join the Revolutionaries.

On account of the treachery of the Sikh Sardars and the premature rising at Meerut, the roots of the revolution were loosened in the Punjab and consequently in Delhi.

The announcement that the whole of Rohilkhand had become free was not a vain boast. The sepoys spoke authoritatively, "The rule of the Company is at an end. Therefore you should quit this country immediately, and go away or else you will be massacred." The Moradabad police also announced that henceforth they would not obey the orders of the English and the

citizens supported them. A proclamation was posted in the bazars. "Residents of Hindustan! The long looked for festival of Swaraj has arrived. Are you going to accept or refuse it? If these English are allowed to remain in India they will butcher all and put an end to your religion? Who has trampled both Hindus and Muslims? Mussalmans! if you revere the Quran and Hindus if you revere the cow-mother unite together in this Sacred War. If Hindus will join hands with the Muslims in the war, as a reward for their patriotism the killing of cows will be put a stop to. In this Holy War he who fights himself and he who helps another to fight by means of money will attain earthly and spiritual freedom. But if any one will oppose this Swadeshi War then he will strike at his own head and be guilty of the sin of suicide."

The Sikhs were at that time possessed of such a spirit of loyalty to the English that they fell at the feet of the English and prayed to be given a chance of fighting the revolutionaries. The Sikhs were waiting for the reward of their loyalty when the English artillery opened fire on them all. Sikh Sardar Surat Singh rendered very valuable assistance to the English who committed all sorts of atrocities not only on Revolutionaries but on peaceful citizens. One Englishman says in his letter: "We set fire to a large village which was full of them. We surrounded them and when they came rushing out of the flames we shot them. You will be gratified to learn that twenty villages were razed to the ground."

PRAYAG

The Prayag Brahmans were of greatest use in spreading in the cities the ideals of Swaraj. With the traditional Hindu prayers were coupled the holy religious prayers of the Revolution. The Moulvis were also busy in asking the Mohammedans to join the revolutionaries. The English were firmly convinced that all Mussalmans were their mortal enemies. At Allahabad the Muslims were more advanced than the Hindus. They were most prominent in the management of the machinery of the secret society.

The joint efforts of the Hindus and Mohammedans for the freedom of their country were very earnest and active. The Allahabad Fort in which were English women and children and a vast store of ammunition was entirely in the hands of the Sikhs. If they had helped, this fort would have fallen into their hands. But the Sikhs, on the contrary, hacked their own countrymen.

Almost at that time the whole province of Allahabad rose like a man.

LUCKNOW

It is difficult to find another Revolution so exciting, so quick, so universal. It was almost an unheard of thing in India, that the masses should awaken and shed pools of blood for the freedom of country and Hindus and Mohammedans should fight side by side for Swadesh realising that their real interests were common and limited. About the 10th of June the whole province of Oudh became independent and all the sepoys and volunteers marched towards Lucknow. In that city, Henry Lawrence was straining every nerve to inspire life into the dying English power. In the Residency there were about a thousand Englishmen and eight hundred Indian sepoys. They prepared to defend themselves against the vast number of revolutionaries collecting outside, who were mustering strong to put an end to the slavery and foreign domination.

The mass of the people in 1857 had thoroughly understood that so long as foreign domination over Hindustan remained, the Indian States were entirely useless.

CENTRAL INDIA

The ideal was the establishment of the country's freedom by breaking the dreadful chains of slavery. The people in the states like Gwalior, Indore, Rajputana and others were also full of the spirit of the revolutionaries but the Scindia of Gwalior resolved to preserve his friendship not with the country but with the English. At this the people rose in fury. "If the Scindia does not wish to fight we shall fight." This very spirit exhibited itself among the people and sepoys of Indore. Most of the States had purposely observed a doubtful attitude. They did not help the English but they did not help the revolutionaries either. And it was this selfish conduct on the part of the Princes which in the end strangled the revolution. Many of them indirectly played the part of traitors and some openly helped the English. After declaring 'Independence' on the 11th of May, the city of Delhi had been busy in organizing the wild storm that such a bold step had raised into a systematised revolution. It proclaimed that the long-standing war between the Hindus and Muslims had ended, that tyranny had ceased and that the people of the soil were once more free to choose their monarch. And from far and near the loyal homage did come to Emperor Bahadur Shah from many

Rajas, many regiments and many of the chief cities of Hindustan A proclamation was at once issued addressed to the whole of Hindustan declaring that foreign domination and the rule of the English had come to an end and that the whole nation was free and independent. The revolutionaries at Delhi began to manufacture arms and ammunition. A big factory of canons, guns and small arms was started. A general order was issued prohibiting the cow-slaughter throughout the country.

THE SIKH CHIEFS

The Rajas of Nabha, Jind and Patiala rendered immense service to the English people by guarding all the highways to the Punjab. The English had besieged the town of Delhi and the revolutionary army was shut up there in one place. The fierce onslaughts of the revolutionaries made them think of raising the siege. At that time the English power in India hung in the balance. The English decided not to raise the siege. The revolutionaries sustained it with rare ability and courage. The Emperor announced publicly that he was ready to give up all his power and abdicate. He said, "It is my ardent wish to see that the English are driven out of Hindustan by all means and at any cost. I am willing to resign my Imperial powers and authority in the hands of any confederacy of the Indian Princes." This unique and typical letter shows how the noble words, Swatantrata, Swaraj, Swadesh and Swadharma and Swadhinta were thoroughly understood in Hindustan. Such an unexpected, surprising and extraordinary transformation is rarely to be seen in the history of the world. After a grim struggle the Revolutionaries lost ground. The Emperor hid himself in Humayun's grave and began to decide upon surrender to the English. After a promise to spare his life, he surrendered. The Princes also surrendered, were put in a carriage and taken to the town. They were dragged out of the carriage and robbed of all valuables. Three shots put an end to the lives of three Princes and their dead bodies were thrown right before the Police Station, and vultures fed on them ; and finally they were thrown into the river.

From the day on which Delhi threw away the English flag from her walls to the day on which English swords drank Swadeshi blood in the palace of Bahadur Shah, this town had done many a heroic act.

In the residency of Lucknow fighting without intermission took place for 87 days and at last the English defeated the Revolutionaries and the Residency was occupied by the English.

Tantia Tope was doing the work of a clerk but one glimpse of the spirit of liberty showed the characteristic, intelligence and brilliance of the old Marathas. His idea was to reorganise the bands disorganised on account of the defeat at Cawnpore. Tantia had a fierce fight with the English at Cawnpore and he had captured the whole of Cawnpore but later on a complete victory was obtained by the English. They were anxious to capture Tantia Tope but therein they failed.

RANI OF JHANSI

"Give up my Jhansi ! I will not. Let him try to take who dares. You cannot have my Jhansi." These are the words of Rani of Jhansi, and all over Bundelkhand ran the deep and terrible premonitions of the coming revolutionary storm.

One day as she was returning after visiting the temple, she saw thousands of beggars blocking the way. The Minister informed her that they suffered immensely on account of cold. The Rani at once issued orders that each one of them be supplied with warm clothings at the state expense.

The Jhansi people were approached by Scindia and other friends of the English to surrender. Jhansi answered from her thousand mouths sternly, "As every one who is born must die why sully fair fame uselessly." So it was determined to give battle to the English for the honour of the country. And Jhansi and Rani of Jhansi were busy by day and by night preparing for the fight. The Queen herself led the whole army. Tantia Tope came with this army to hearten the Jhansi army. Tantia had under him the largest number of troops he ever had but the most object cowardice was exhibited by the revolutionary troops. They did not even offer fight, not a canon shot from Jhansi was heard. Plentiful military supplies were captured by the English. Rani of Jhansi when informed that the situation had grown critical said, "I have determined to blow myself up by the fort, setting fire to the ammunition with my own hands. If not on the throne I shall be on the pyre. I should choose to die in the battlefield." Fear could exist only in the hearts of ordinary mortals. Those who are charmed by the ideals of Independence welcome death as the only means of achieving the ideal, one could succeed in frightening those, who fight for victory or who battle for glory may fear, but who could frighten him who fights for death alone.

Rani Lakhsmi left Jhansi in a male apparel and reached Kalpi and met the Peshwa. They resolved to carry on the war as vigorously as ever. Again did Lakshmi Bai and the brave Tantia

Tope begin to make preparations for the coming deadly fight. The revolutionaries were routed. Rani Lakshmi went to Peshwa and told him that if the army was properly organised, the enemy should never be victorious. Rani Lakshmi appeared in the battlefield, her horse at full speed and her sword cutting men right and left. With her inspiration the revolutionaries advanced on all sides and Rani shone among them. She donned her usual military uniform, rode a noble steed, took out her gem, bestudded sword from the scabbard and ordered the army under her to march on. Her two female friends Mandar and Kashi also fought by her side. Like lightning she moved about all day and charged the enemy with her army. She led her troops to repeated and fierce attacks and though her ranks were pierced through and were gradually becoming thinner and thinner, the Rani was seen in the foremost rank rallying her shattered troops and performing marvels of valour. The English fired shot after shot on her and pursued her like hounds. She crossed sword with them all but one of them hit her on the hand her right eye came out. Just then another blow hit her on chest. Even at the point of death she killed the man who had attacked her and the queen was on the last breath. Bathed in blood thus Goddess of War reclined on the bed and she died immediately. She was cremated immediately lest her dead body be defiled by the English.

Thus had Lakshmi a glorious end. She achieved her purpose, fulfilled her ambition, carried out her resolve. It is very rarely that a nation is so fortunate as to be able to claim such an angel as a daughter and as a queen.

This Revolution was a violent upheavel not only against the political supremacy of Britain but against the whole new order of things she was importing into India. It was for more than a military or Muslim insurrection. It was really a large-scale popular outbreak against the British rule. It was the first expression of India's urge for throwing off British domination.

The Revolution failed, and though vengance sleeps long it never dies, but it was not without its lessons. It united Hindus and Mohammedans. It awakened national consciousness, startled the public feeling of England out of its state of unhealthy and langour. Some Englishmen expressed alarm as the very sangunary methods of repression and punishment that were so freely adopted by their countrymen after the Revolution. It was a national revolt against slavery.

CHAPTER VII

Indian Politics Since the Revolt

The rising of 1857 which developed into a war waged with ferocity on both the sides was in reality a nationalist war fought to secure Independence and though it was confined to particular parts of India it nevertheless provided the spectacle of Hindus and Mohammedans in willing co-operation. It left much bitterness on both sides. It bequeathed to the survivors everlasting memories. After that there were no signs of an Indian Nationalist movement for years. It was not until after 1870 that Indian Nationalism entered a new phase of development. The press, the theatre and the secret revolutionary. societies were specially active in Bengal in forwarding nationalist aims. The lives of Garibaldi and Mazzini were translated while, the goal of National liberation was proclaimed in books, in romantic political songs and tales. Indian papers like *Amrita Bazar Patrika* adopted a sharper tone in criticising the Government. About this time India's ancient religions began to awaken to new life and side by side with romantic and religious nationalism another type gave evidence of far greater vigour. It was guided by men who regarded Western influence, and British rule as a benefit to India who worked zealously on behalf of liberal and enlightened social reforms and made it their aim to secure by peaceful means the increasing participation of Indians in the Government of their country and to blend Western European culture with the traditional Indian character. This movement had its origin among men who had enjoyed an English education and had come in contact with European civilisation. Lord Ripon was sent to India to take Lord Lytton's place with the object of initiating a more liberal regime in India. He introduced a Bill known as Ilbert Bill with the object of putting European and Indians on an equality in criminal proceediugs. The Bill was greeted enthusiastically by the Indians but the English residents

Subhas

The Pride of the Nation

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in India opposed it vehemently. No Indian has ever forgotten this lesson.

THE POTENCY OF AGITATION

It was the Anglo-Indian bureaucracy and Anglo-Indian Press that defeated Lord Ripon's intentions and the Ilbert Bill evoking the bitterest racial hostility by their manner of discussing and opposing it. The English threatened to use force to prevent the Ilbert Bill from becoming law and attacked Viceroy's liberalism far more furiously than their Indian opponents.

There was a plan actually to capture and deport Lord Ripon. An English club is said to have decorated its walls with brooms to convey to the over-zealousness of his work for it was expected that his successor would sweep away all his nonsensical ideas about equity and equality !

A counter resentment was stirred in the minds of Indians who felt that a racial privilege was being perpetuated and that a slur was cast on Indian magistrates and their judicial fairness. Since those days the racial hostility and hatred of the English in India have ever increased and the Indians have also hated the English with full vigour though not very openly. When Lord Ripon left the country, the Indians gave him an ovation such as they had given no Viceroy before or since. The Amrita Bazar Patrika of Calcutta wrote, " India is a land where it is impossible for men like Lord Ripon to stay. The atmosphere is stifling to his lofty soul."

What happened under Lord Ripon's rule was characteristic of the changed attitude of the Indian Civil Service. About this time racial sentiment had become so strong in India that civil servants and merchants felt themselves united in opposition to Indian claims and interests. Meanwhile under the influence of European education a generation had grown up in the Indian upper classes especially among Hindus who thought in terms of English ideas and earnestly desired to lead India gradually towards European enlightenment and European customs. The British Indian Association in Bengal was started in 1851 and had carried on work for decades. For the Maharastra the Poona Saravajanik Sabha was dealing with topics of public interest. In 1883 Tarapando Bannerji had proposed establishing a National Congress and a National fund to finance its policies and enable it to maintain a permanent representative in London and political emissaries in all parts of India and to promote national education, industry and trade by means of newspapers, books, lectures, and other methods. In Bombay there

was the Bombay Association which owed its origin to Dadabhai. The East India Association superseded it. In the south public life was inaugurated by the Hindus. In 1872 Sir Syed Ahmed Khan had begun to issue his paper which had brought about a rapid change in the ideas of Mohammedans with literary interests. They had come to regard the earlier Urdu and Persian styles as unnatural. The principal poet of that period was Syed Altaf Hussain Hali. He was a supporter of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan's reform movement. He broke away from the conventional forms of traditional poetry. He exercised an extraordinary influence in spreading progressive ideas among the Mohammedans of India. He pointed to Islam's past greatness, the sources of its power and its present decadence. He was severe in the criticism of his fellow countrymen's backwardness and advocated reforms and education.

Bengali literature received a like impetus. In 1845 at a memorial service for David Hare a speech was made for the first time in Bengali and the necessity and importance of cultivating the Bengali language of their country and of their childhood in which their earliest thoughts and ideas were couched were stressed.

The first classic writers such as Bankim Chandra Chatterji and Dina Bandhu Mitra have produced much impression on Bengali nation. Bankim's Bengali novel Ananda Math became the bible of modern Bengali patriotism. Bande Mataram, the national anthem of the Indian nationalist movement, is a song taken from that novel. The Indian revolutionary political association which first sprang up in Bengal regarded this book with great veneration and were inspired by it. The oath sworn by the hero of the book in Ananda Math has been repeated by many a young Bengali. The new Bengali literature proved a powerful force in arousing modern Indian nationalist sentiment.

In Bengal the Brahmo Samaj founded by Raja Ram Mohan Roy is a theistic sect. Sjt. Keshabchandra Sen founded a new society. Another religious movement, the followers of which wield a strong influence on political thought is the Arya Samaj founded by Maharshi Dayanand Saraswati. It developed a virile manhood in the nation which combined the past with the present. It based its creed on the Vedas and claimed that these alone were the revealed scriptures and they contain the seeds of all knowledge. The slogan of this Samaj is, "Back to Vedas and back to the Aryan civilization." It advocated social reform. Madame Blavasky, the founder of the Theosophical Society, developed her cult. It established its centre near Madras. It laid special emphasis on a

rediscovery as well as rehabilitation of all that was great and glorious in the oriental culture. It helped to check that sense of racial superiority of the West and planted a new cultural centre in India. None of these spiritual movements had any direct political aims but they brought together men who were seeking fresh interpretation of the old faiths.

In 1884 a small meeting held at Madras, chiefly composed of delegates to the annual convention of the Theosophical Society decided to organise committees to gather adherents for an Indian National Union and meet again for political discussions. At Calcutta there already existed the British Indian Association chiefly supported by landed proprietors to look after their interests and under its control a conference was held in Calcutta in 1883. It was attended by representatives from various provinces. It sat for 3 days and President Ananda Mohan Bose called it the first stage to a National Parliament. Mr. S. N. Bannerji took up educational work and his aim was to kindle in the young the beginnings of public spirit and to inspire them with a patriotic ardour fruitful of good to them and to the Motherland, and his method was to lecture on Indian unity, the study of history, the lives of Mazzini and Chaitanya. He founded the Indian Association in 1876. From ethical and social improvement the step to political activity was short. The career and writings of Mazzini quickened the imagination of Bengalis already enlivened by religious and ethical excitement. In April 1878 an Act was passed restricting the liberty of Indian Press and another measure was passed to limit the possession of firearms. These Acts combined with the reduction of age limit for entrance to the Indian Civil Service led to further activity in criticism of the Government, and discontent with the opportunities available to Indians of controlling the direction of public affairs, as well as of obtaining posts in the public service. Lord Ripon announced some proposed advances in local self-Government and his repeal of the Press Act greatly increased his popularity. He has been able to do little for India but to him we owe the inception of a new movement—the effort of the educated Indians to do something for their country. The masses in general were crushed and cowed down. They had lost all incentive and they lacked initiative. The ruthless manner in which the English wreaked vengeance on the people after the revolt had killed the souls of those who remained behind. The hopes of the masses had been frustrated and they were in a very depressed mood and had more or less reconciled themselves to the foreign domination. At that time was the foundation of the Indian National Congress laid

not for Swaraj nor Swadesh nor Swadhinta nor Swatantrata or Swadharma but for few crumbs that may fall from the table of the British, whose power in India had been established on firm foundations.

The East India Company upon which all political parties in England agreed in throwing the blame of the revolt was abolished and India was to be ruled in the name of the Queen. The East India Company thought of nothing but the present time regardless of future. They thought of nothing but the immediate division of the loot and plunder. A proclamation prepared under Queen's direction announced that the Government of India had been assumed by her. The East India Company was found totally corrupt and perverted. States, once the most flourishing, had been reduced to a state of impotence. It is notorious that public works, roads, tanks and canals were allowed to fall into dilapidation. The guiding principle was 'Do nothing, have nothing done, let nobody do anything, let the people die of famine.' They were holding a revolver in one hand and picking the pocket with the other.

Lord Canning was to be the first Viceroy. All treaties made by the Company with Indian Princes were to be maintained. The Queen desired no extension of territory, no encroachment on the rights of others, promised full religious liberty to her Indian subjects, abstention from all interference with the religious beliefs or worship of any of her subjects on pains of her highest displeasure, and would always respect their ancient usages. She offered pardon to all such who had not directly taken part in the murder of Europeans. She would constantly endeavour to promote the prosperity of her Indian dominions. "Our subjects of whatever race or creed be freely and impartially admitted to offices in our services."

This proclamation which was merely a ceremonial document though full of sweet and soothing expressions, noble and sympathetic sentiments, has always been honoured more in its breach than in its being adhered to or acted upon. India has been ruled since then much more despotically, autocratically, irresponsibly and tyrannically than in the days of the East India Company. It is absurd to call it the Magna Charta of our liberties. It was calculated to smooth the ruffled feelings of the people and reconcile them to the rules of England. One is forced to believe that it was issued to cover the ulterior designs of the English for the exploitation of India.

In early .eighties, the bureaucracy had done their worst to thwart the proclaimed concessions, the privileges promised were

never offered, the liberty of the Press, the right of public meeting, etc., were all restricted. These ill-starred measures of reaction combined with Russian methods of police oppression were goading people to another Revolution. It was only in time that Mr. Hume and his advisers were inspired to intervene. When he became convinced that a Revolutionary outbreak was imminent, he resolved to open a safety valve for this unrest and the Congress was such an outlet. His idea was to find out ways and means of directing the popular impulse of which he had such alarming evidence, into an innocuous channel. It was the purpose of the British Government to stem the tide of national forces in India; the Government posed as the benevolent patron of an All-India awakening for otherwise the situation threatened to get out of hand. It was at this time that he conceived the idea of bringing into existence a national gathering of Indians and to that end addressed to the graduates of the Calcutta University a soul-stirring letter in which he asked for fifty men, good and true, men of unselfishness, moral courage, self-control and active spirit of benevolence. If only fifty men, good and true, could be found to join as founders, the thing could be established and the further development would be comparatively easy. The ideal produced before these men was a democratic constitution, freedom from personal ambitions, and the dictum. "He who is greatest among you let him be your servant." The concluding portion of this letter is as follows:

"And if even the leaders of thought are all either such poor creatures or so selfishly wedded to personal concerns that they dare not strike a blow for their country's sake then justly and rightly are they kept down and trampled on, for they deserve nothing better. Every nation secures precisely as good a government as it merits. If you, the picked men, the most highly educated of the nation cannot, scorning personal ease and selfish objects, make a resolute struggle to secure greater freedom for yourselves and your country, a more impartial administration, a larger share in the management of your own affairs then we your friends are wrong and our adversaries right, then are Lord Ripon's noble aspirations for your good fruitless, and visionary, then at present at any rate all hopes of progress are at an end and India truly neither desires nor deserves any better Government than she enjoys. Only if this be so, let us hear no more facetious peevish complaints that you are kept in leading strings and treated like children for you will have proved yourself such. Men know how to act. Let there be no more complaining of Englishmen being preferred to

you in all important offices for if you lack that public spirit, that highest form of altruistic devotion that leads men to subordinate private ease to the public ideal, that patriotism that has made Englishmen what they are, then rightly are those preferred to you, rightly and meritably they have become your rulers. And rulers and task-masters they must continue. Let the yoke gall your shoulders ever so sorely until you realize and stand prepared to act upon the eternal truth, that self-sacrifice and unselfishness are the only unfailing guides to freedom and happiness."

Allan Hume had belonged to the Indian Civil Service. The scheme that he had in mind in founding the Congress he elaborated three years later in a speech at Allahabad. Congress was to merge in one national whole, all the different and hitherto hostile elements that make up the population of India. It was to direct the process of rebirth of the nation so evolved intellectually, morally, socially and politically and to strengthen the tie that bound England and India by changing whatever was unjust or injurious to India. The aim of the Congress was to bring all Indian leaders in touch with one another and so strengthen their sentiments of unity and train them politically.

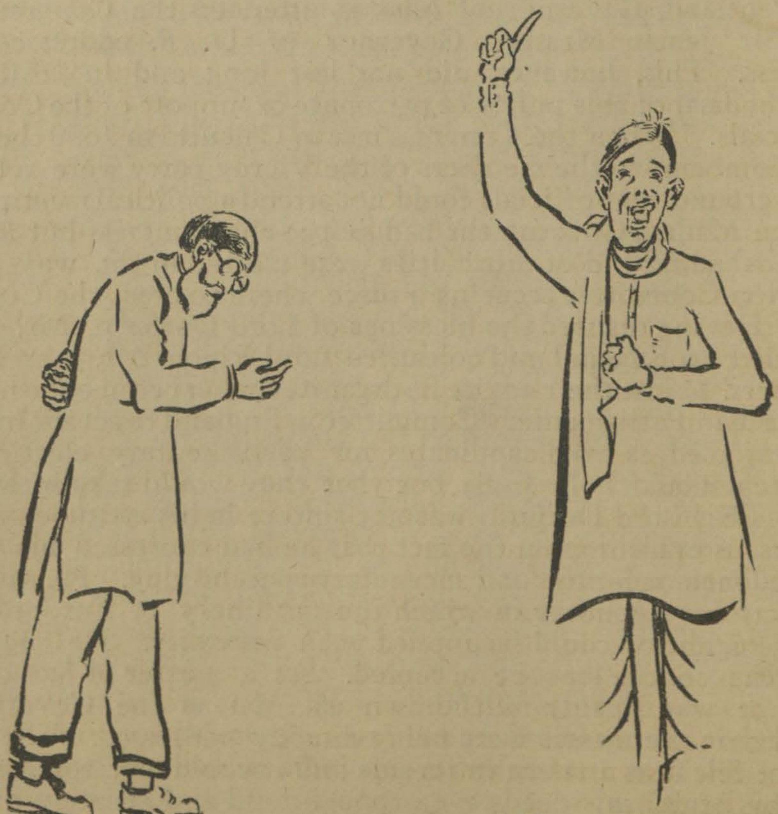
Mr. Hume's idea was that provincial organizations should take up political questions for there were recognised political bodies in Calcutta, Bombay, Madras and other parts of India and he thought that these bodies might suffer in importance if when Indian politicians from different parts of country came together and discussed politics. His idea was that the Governor of the province where the politicians met should be asked to preside over their deliberations and that thereby great cordiality should be established between the official classes and the non-official Indian politicians. Lord Dufferin took great interest in the matter and after considering over it for some time he sent for Mr. Hume and told him that his project would not be of much use. He said there was no body of persons in this country who performed the functions which Her Majesty's opposition did in England. It would be very desirable in the interests of both the governors and the governed that Indian politicans should meet yearly and point out in what respects the administration was defective and how it could be improved upon and he added that such an assembly should not be presided over by a local Governor for in his presence the people might not like to speak their minds.

Mr. W. C. Bonnerji has written : " It will probably be news to many that the Indian National Congress as it was originally started and as it has since been carried on is in reality the work

of the Marquess of Dufferin, the Viceroy of India. Mr. Hume had, in 1884, conceived the idea that it would be of great advantage to the country if leading politicians could be brought together once a year to discuss social matters and be upon friendly footing with one another. He did not desire that politics should form part of their discussions. The leading politicians of India unanimously accepted Lord Dufferin's scheme and proceeded to give effect to it. Lord Dufferin had made it a condition that his name in connection with the scheme of the Congress should not be divulged so long as he remained in the country and this condition was faithfully maintained and none but the men consulted by Mr. Hume knew anything about the matter."

The resolutions of the first Congress were settled at a private meeting held at the residence of Principal Wordsworth of Elphinstone College and was attended by officials who included Sir William Wedderburns, Mr. Ranade and others. Mr. Ranade took part in the deliberations of the open session. In 1886 Lord Pentland, Governor of Madras, attended the Congress. In 1887 Sir James Meston, Governor of U. P. addressed the Congress. This, however, did not last long and in 1890 there was a reversal of this policy of patronage or support of the Congress by officials. When the Congress met in Calcutta in 1890 the usual invitations sent to the members of the Vicroy party were returned on the ground that officials could not attend a political meeting. In 1887 the Madras Government had helped the Congress but in 1888 at Allahabad no end of difficulties were created in the way of the Reception Committee securing a place where to erect the Congress camp. Having secured the blessings of Lord Dufferin, Mr. Hume proceeded to England and consulted Lord Ripon, Mr. John Bright and others. Under their advice he organized what became the nucleus of the Indian Parliamentary Committee in England to act for India by obtaining pledges from candidates for parliamentary election not that they would help India but that they would take interest in India. That Lord Dufferin was not sincere in his attitude towards Congress is evident from the fact that he had expressed his desire to forbid mass meetings and incendiary speechifying. He said that India was not a country in which the machinery of European democratic agitation could be applied with impunity. He suggested that some concessions be accepted. As a matter of fact official patronage was openly withdrawn as soon as the Government noticed that the masses were being directly addressed. The Government felt it as a thorn in its side and it could not tolerate any criticisms of its mis-deeds even though mild and sedately phrased

and couched in the most conciliatory and respectful language. The British Imperialism very soon began to realise and fear the progressive potentialities of the Congress. The tone of Government spokesmen changed sharply for the worse. The Anglo-Indian Press denounced it as a seditious and unrepresentative organisation. Lord Dufferin described it as a microscopic minority and its goal as a big jump into the unknown. In 1887 a delegate who attended the Congress was called on to give a security of Rs. 20,000. In 1890 a circular was issued forbidding Government officials to attend Congress Sessions even as visitors. Lord Curzon wrote to the Secretary of State for India in 1900, "The Congress is tottering to its fall and one of my great ambitions while in India is to assist it to a peaceful demise."



No more begging

CHAPTER VIII

The Indian National Congress

Swaraj Is My Birth Right and I Will Have It

—TILAK

THERE is a Divinity that shapes the ends of individuals, nations and countries and it was ordained that British should land in India as adventurers and shopkeepers excluding all gentlemen from their Company and should by force and fraud, hypocrisy and dishonesty, foul and perfidious methods, occupy our country and by creating dissensions and discords amongst us, divide us and rule over us. Disruption, dismemberment and disintegration of India was the sole objective of these birds of prey and passage who came to India to enrich themselves, their masters and their country. Never was a nation more ruthlessly exploited, more cruelly fleeced, more treacherously treated and more mortally wounded. Never was a nation so persistently and so completely reduced from the position of rulers and emperors to pariahs and slaves. Riches gone, religion reduced to nothing, language changed, culture and civilization all replaced by outlandish things, literacy finished, health gone and this land of plenty has now become a land of poverty, sickness and wretchedness. What an irony of fate! This holy land consecrated by Rishis and redeemers, Mahatmas and magnates, prophets and philosophers, great and good men and women, should have been subjected to these tortures and tyrannies, agonies and afflictions. A nation who gave life and light, culture and civilization to the world is reduced to this deplorable condition that its children should starve and famish, that its people be kept illiterate, that its vitality should be sapped, that its very existence be undermined. Pestilences and famines, starvation and disease are today the essential features of India which has been sucked dry by the British.

Foreign domination is an unmitigated condemnation. The exploitation of the people of this country has been conducted in such a masterly manner that the victims have been kissing the hands of their persecutors and the kicks have been accepted as gifts. The record of the British connection with India is dark and dismal. There is not a crime, not a sin, not a villainy, not a treachery not a fraud, which has not been committed on this soil by those who have ruled over us. We have in the preceding pages given a glimpse of what Clive has done, what Warren Hastings did, what Wellesley did and what Dalhousie did. We have briefly narrated the story of the merciless manner in which we have been treated by the British. India deeply regrets her connection with England. Nothing can ever make amends to a nation for the destruction of its national spirit and of the capacity to defend itself and the soil from which it springs. Now we propose to give an account of what has been so far done to get rid of the curse of foreign rule. It is true that never did India willingly surrender to the British. We never accepted their domination willingly. We never agreed to their being here. All the myths of Pax Britianica and of the providential connection of British and Indians have been exploded and no sane man will ever believe that the advent of the British has been of the slightest benefit to India. We have been disarmed, we have been cheated of our National rights, of freedom of thought, speech and action, deprived of all that makes life worth living. This peace of which so much capital is made is that of a grave-yard. There was no anarchy when the British came to India but if there was some unrest here or there that was much more preferable to this so-called peace. It is indeed a matter of great regret that some of our ancestors gave expression to this idea that the connection between the British and India is a providential thing. It may be providential and fortunate for the British to have pounced upon India to carry away shipfuls of gold and silver but as far as India is concerned all that it has gained by this connection is loss of self-respect, loss of culture, loss of civilization, loss of nationalism, loss of national language, in short, loss of everything that makes a nation or that exalts a nation.

It was in 1858 that the people of India did make a bid for independence but unluckily it was not properly organized and ably managed. But this is an unfortunate fact that ever since the language of this country was made English and Indians were allowed to associate with the administration even though as humble assistants, the revolutionary spirit is found absent in the nation as

a whole. Now and then, here and there, have been isolated attempts to attain Independence but on the whole the attitude of the people changed from an open and distinct revolt to that of grim sullenness and utter helplessnes, but the English-educated leaders adopted the role of constitutional critics, mild and accommodating, loyal and obedient, not aspiring for the restitution of crown and throne but for a few gifts and favours which have been very tardily and grudgingly given by the British to silence the people. It is a very sad and depressing tale that in the sessions of the Congress for years and years homage was paid to the throne, welcome accorded to the rulers and prayers were offered for the British nation to continue its grip on India. What a sorrowful spectacle that while we were being bled to death we were full of praise and admiration for the British! The age of Siraj-ud-daula, Shivaji, Hyderali and Marathas, Tipu and Peshwas, Rani of Jhansi and Tantia Topi was gone and was replaced by a generation of people whom western civilzation had enchanted and ensnared and who became willing victims of subjection and servility. The Indian National Congress was never founded to win Swaraj. It was an organization to give vent to our feelings of dissatisfaction at all doors of services being banged against us. It may be fatalism, it may be prudence, it may be cowardice, it may be expediency, it may be an acknowledgment of our weakness, whatever it may be it is a dark chapter in our history that we met year after year to cry and whimper, and to plead and appeal, to the British for a few posts and jobs and to bless the British Raj and pay compliments to the nation which had brought about our downfall in every sphere of life. Even at the risk of being blamed as ungrateful we have to frankly admit that the behaviour of the intelligentsia of those days is not such of which any nation can be proud of. To be helpless, to throw off the yoke is one thing, but to express gratitude, contentment, delight and satisfaction at our subjugation, which was complete in every respect, is an unpardonable sin and unforgettable wrong. To have banked on unbounded faith on the British justice is an unforgettable sin. But even the worm would turn and the old order changed giving pace to new. Bolder ond bolder became the attitude of the Congress. The distress of dumb-driven and down-trodden masses could not be suppressed for long. The Government tried to crush this organization. Repression and suppression did produce depression, now and then but the caravan moved on and on and today, the Indian National Congress is the expression and epitome of India's struggle. It is the focus point of national feelings and aspirations and it speaks for them, it acts for them and it moves and has its being in them

for freedom. It is the only powerful political organization of the people. It is their Parliament. It is their mouthpiece through which they speak and express their thoughts and feelings. It is a sacred temple at whose altar millions of its followers have made the highest sacrifices. It has successfully weathered many a storm, survived many a struggle and faced many a crisis. Hume described the Congress as a stone in the foundation of the stability of British Government in India, because it was brought into existence by those who believed in petitions and prayers and who accepted the British Raj as a settled fact. They believed in respectful requests and prayerful submission, and untiringly and incessantly talked of blessings of British Rule. Now as it has gained in strength it has become stronger, mightier and instead of crying for reforms and concessions it began to demand the Government of the people by the people and for the people. 'Quit India' is now the objective. Lokmanya Tilak proclaimed :' " Swaraj is my birthright and I shall have it." He advised people to achieve this goal by their own efforts. An empire has never come to an end by the rulers conceding power to the ruled. He told people that the remedy was not petitioning. It was direct action. He had to pay a very heavy penalty for his bold and fearless denunciation of the British Raj but he was made of sterner stuff and he never relented or relaxed his efforts. Since the entry of Mahatma Gandhi in the arena the Congres has taken a new turn and it has become a revolutionary but a non-violent organization. Non-violence is the essential characteristic of this August Assembly. Mahatma Gandhi has a unique personality. He has revolutionised the political struggle of India by peaceful and non-violent means. He has by his own example inspired the people of India with the love of their country and under his command the Congress has fought many a battle with non-violent methods. He has given the nation the most efffective weapon of non-co-operation. It is very unfortunate that the country has not obeyed his instructions fully and properly, otherwise India would have been free by this time. The Congress has waged a non-violent and effective war against the British domination. It shall continue till India is free in every respect.

Mahatma Gandhi, the sole representative of the Indian National Congress at the Round Table Conference made a remarkable speech before the Federal Structure Committee. An extract from that is given below :

" I am but a poor, humble agent acting on behalf of the Indian National Congress ; and it might be as well to remind ourselves of what the Congress stands for and what it is.

" The Congress is the oldest political organization we have in India. It has had nearly 50 years of life, during which period, it has without any interruption held its annual sessions. It is what it means, National. It claims to represent all interests and all classes. It was first conceived in an English brain, Mr. Hume, we know as father of Congress. It was nursed by great Parsees, Pherozshah Mehta and Dadabhoy Naoroji whom all India is delighted to recognise as its grand old men. From the very commencement the Congress had Hindus, Mussalmans, Christians, Anglo-Indians, I might say all religions, sections and creeds represented upon it more or less fully.

" The Congress has from its commencement taken up the cause of the so-called untouchables, but in 1920 it took a large step and brought the question of removal of untouchability a plank on the political platform and just as the Congress considered unity amongst all classes to be indispensable for the attainment of Swaraj so also did the Congress consider the removal of the curse of untouchability as an indispensable condition for the attainment of full freedom.

"The position the Congress took up in 1920 remains the same today and so you will see that the Congress has attempted from its very beginning to be what it has described itself to be, namely, National in every sense of the term. The Congress has always endeavoured to serve the Princes of India by refraining from any interference in their domestic and internal affairs. The Congress has always endeavoured to deserve the claim it has made. It has failed, I know often, to live up to the claim but I venture to submit that if you were to examine the history of the Congress you would find that it has more often succeeded and progressively succeeded than failed. Above all the, Congress represents in its essence the dumb semi-starved millions scattered over the length and breadth of 7 lakhs of villages, no matter whether they come from what is called British India or what is called Indian India, Every interest which in the opinion of the Congress is worthy of protection is to subserve this interest and if there is a genuine, real clash I have no hesitation in saying on behalf of the Congress that it will sacrifice every interest for the sake of the interest of these dumb millions. It is therefore esssentially a peasant organisation and is becoming so progressively. We are, through the All-India Spinners' Association, finding work for nearly 50,000 women in nearly 2,000 villages, probably 50% of these women are Mohammedans. Thousands of them belong to the so-called untouchable class. We have thus in this constructive manner

penetrated these villages and the effort is being made to cover every one of the 7 lacs of villages. It is a superhuman task but if human effort can do so, you will presently find the Congress covering all of those villages and bringing to them the message of spinning wheel." Mahatmaji has very clearly stated the objective of the Congress and has emphasised its national character. This Congress which has now acquired so much power and prestige, influence and strength, has a very humble beginning. Its roots are to be discovered in the separate political associations in various parts of India. It was brought into existence by the bitterness caused by the reduction of age limit for entrance into the Indian Civil Service, caused by disgraceful agitation of Anglo-Indians over Ilbert Bill, and watered by repressive laws like the Vernacular Press Act, Arms Act, and Bengal repression and tyrranous policy pursued by the British in India.

"No Indian," declared Gokhale, "could have started the Indian National Congress." The reason is not far to seek. Apart from the fact, that any one undertaking so great an enterprise, would need a personality and an influence possessed by few Indians at the time since their ambitions were mainly local, there is not the slightest doubt that if an Indian had the temerity to launch it, it would have been nipped in the bud by the officials. Such was the official distrust of political agitation in those days, that had not the founder of the Congress been an Englishman and a distinguished ex-official, the authorities would have at once found some way or other of suppressing the movement." One feels very much humiliated that there was not a single Indian at that time who could have taken the responsibility of leading his country out of the slough of despond in which they were at that time. Mr. Hume started the Congress not for the betterment of India but for strengthening the foundations of British Raj. He had written in his memorable letter: "Every nation gets precisely as good Government as it merits." How much so ever one may be thankful to Mr. Hume for founding an organization which has by its efforts grown mighty like an oak we wish every Indian to keep it in mind that the motive behind it was not the liberation of India from foreign yoke but to make the British rule strike firmer and surer roots in India. Where sword had failed Mr. Hume wanted sweet words and pleasant promises easily made and still more easily broken to capture the imagination of Indians. The Government was past master in the art of breaking to the heart the words of promise they had uttered to the ear. Mr. Hume had a thorough grasp of the oriental mentality of

Indians, *viz.*, that they had a child-like faith in British word. Britian had imposed on India a foreign domination and the mechanism of thorough exploitation. The real India never submitted supinely to this alien intruder, the people were discontented, dissatisfied and dsigruntled. There is so much to be proud of in the story of our people's untutored and untiring opposition of the foreign conqueror. Our English educated ancestors can not claim that glory. They surrendered and atonce went on their knees for boons and favours. They bartered away their birth right for some posts and offices and instead of trying to extricate themselves from the snares of a foreign rule began to claim and clamour for a share in that exploitation. This is not a bright or inspiring, elevating or encouraging chapter in the history of India. The president of the first Congress said : " We desire to be governed according to the ideas of Governments prevalent in Europe. We are thoroughly loyal. We want proper and legitimate share in the Government." Mr. Hume called for three cheers and if possible thrice that, for the Queen Empress. This is the lowest depth of servility that in a gathering of Indians such a tribute be paid to a foreign ruler whose officers had deprived us of all that is worth having in this world. Hume himself gave his idea of the Congress as a safety-valve for the escape of great and growing forces generated by the atrocities of the British. For many years its first resolution was always the presentation of its respectful loyalty to the throne. Flattery, sycophancy, moderation, meekness, humility and even humiliation, characterised the proceedings of the Congress. There was neither the desire nor the hope for responsibility at the Centre and if it had been then suggested that India should have complete Independence and sever its connections with the British, delegates would probably have died from shock. Dadabhay Naoroji described it not as a nursery for sedition and rebellion but another stone in the foundation of the stability of British Government. The Congress passed resolutions mainly concerned with the growing association of Indians in the work of administration. It did not entertain the idea of embarking upon agitation, constitutional or otherwise. It was composed of moderate leaders of public opinion who expected to win their way with the Government and acquire high posts by persistent flattery and patient persuasion and it had become almost a universal rule that such Indians were immediately silenced by being selected for high posts or being honoured with titles.

Unswerving loyalty to the British Crown was the sacred mantra of the Congress. The educated community admired the

British, applauded British principles of Government, wanted India to emulate British virtues. They were the friends, natural and necessary allies in keeping the British domination in full force. Dadabhoy Naoroji excalimed, " We are loyal to the backbone." As if Indians had any backbone at that time! Extravagant and undeserved praise of the British was the regular feature of the Congress Sessions for quite a long period. The burden of these utterances was that the English are fair and just, and that the Congress was essentially loyal to the throne. These educated leaders fell an easy prey to the diplomacy of the British who wanted to create a gulf between the masses and the intelligentsia. They had already separated Hindus, Mohammedans and Sikhs and other communities from each other and they now were determined to drive a wedge in the two strata of the society, high and low and by enlisting the support of the intelligentsia, by giving them sops, thus to freely and fully exploit the masses, the real owners of this land. It did not take very long for our early leaders to experience disillusionment with regard to Britian's Imperial role. The tone of Government spokesmen in regard to Congress changed sharply for the worse. Gradually the Congress lost its apologetic note and began to criticise a bit more frankly and boldly the maladministration of the country. Loyalty, humble submissions, praise and flattery were all there, but respectful requests and prayerful demands were also made and what is most humiliating is this that their trust and faith in the British sense of justice and fairness remained unshaken. The British to be credited with sense of justice in their dealings with India and Indians is a preposterous idea and can only be defended on the plea that fear of persecution had prevented Indians from expressing their innermost feelings. These British who have ruined India more by fraud than by force, more by tricks than by sword, more by chincanery and conspiracy than by gun-powder cannot by any stretch of imagination be credited with having been just in their dealings with us. While millions of Indians were becoming the fodder of famine and plague, money was being extravagantly thrown away on pageants, Darbaris, feast, and Tamashas. They have robbed and plundered, have exploited and looted, and have made us untouchables in our own country and abroad and yet these leaders of ours had, and some even now, have an abiding faith in their sincerity of purpose.

It is said that when Sir Henry Cotton, ex-Chief Commissioner of Assam visited India as president of the Indian National Congress, Government officials were forbidden to offer him hospitality and the dak bungalow of the teritorries over which he



The Invincible Frontier Leaders of India

had once ruled were closed to him.

Another instance is worth recording. A deputation of the Indian Association waited upon Lord Curzon to present an address of welcome. While they were assembled in the State room, an aide-de-camp came in a few minutes before the Viceroy with a view to satisfy himself that the arrangements were in proper order. He noticed two members of the deputation wearing Indian pump shoes. He asked them to remove the shoes or retire from the deputation. They chose the latter course. This incident created a painful impression, and one or two other members wanted to follow those who had withdrawn but it was considered to be discourteous to the head of the Government, aud pocketing their pride they presented the address of welcome to a Viceroy on whose administration the Congress had given the following verdict:

"Never since the dark days of Lord Lytton's Viceroyalty had India been so distracted, discontented and despondent, the victim of so many misfortunes, political and other, the target of so much scorn and calumny, emanating from the highest quarters, its most moderate demands ridiculed and its most reasonable prayers greeted with stiff negative, its noblest aspirations spurned and denounced as pure mischief or solemn nonsense, its most cherished ideals hurled down from their pedestal and trodden under foot. Never had the condition of India been more critical than it was during the ill-starred administration of Lord Curzon."

Mr. Gokhale said: "For a parallel to such an administration we must I think go back to the times of Aurangzeb in the history of our country and the same persistence in the policy of distrust and mistrust and repression resurgence in bitter experience all round." Lord Curzon had said that Indians were, by their environment, heritage and upbringing unequal to any high office under British Rule. He had written exultantly to the Secretary of State in 1900. 'The Congress is tottering to its fall and one of my great ambitions, while in India is to assist it to a peaceful demise.' Lord Curzon's regime was a blessing in disguise. To him belongs the credit of being the cause of a mighty resurgence of the people's spirit which materially and substantially changed the fate of India. He was the architect of Indian Nationalism. He built better than he knew. His ambition of assisting Congress to a demise never materialised. On the other hand he gave a fresh impetus to the Nationalist activities and he assisted the Congress to be reborn as a revolutionary organization. His ill-advised partition of Bengal gave rise to a stormy agitation in and around Bengal. Simul-

taneously the boycott and Swadeshi movements were conducted. These gained immense support and strength in the country. The whole of India reverberated with feelings of indignation against Government and sympathy towards Bengal. The net outcome of the Curzonian dispensation was an all-India agitation quickening the sense of national oneness and solidarity.

Addressing students at the Convocation of Calcutta University he spoke of truth as a western virtue and suggested that Orientals like the Cretans were liars. and they were given to flattery, and other heinous sins. It was an insult to the whole of India. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* retorted the next day by reproducing an extract from Lord Curzon's book, in which he had confessed that to make a good impression on the President of the Korean Foreign Office, he gave a false age, and when asked if he was related to the Queen of England replied that he was as yet an unmarried man. Imagine the man making such an insolent disrespectful, impertinent and unscrupulous and unbecoming suggestions, finding fault with the descendants of Bhagwan Rama, Yudhishtra and who are the embodiments of Truth Raja Harish Chandra and calling them liars when he confesses his own lies, and when the whole record of the conquest of India by the East India Company is a sorrowful tale of falsehoods and frauds. If India had been alive it would have taken its fullest revenge and declared a war against such rulers but in India were still found many who would incessantly extol the virtues of their rulers and would either through fear and cowardice or greed and avarice bless them.

As a protest against Partition of Bengal a boycott movement was started. The student community enthusiastically took up the propaganda. They carried the boycott thoroughly with an astonishing attention to every detail, even refusing in one instance to answer an examination paper on paper of foreign manufacture. Nor were the women less enthusiastic. Swadeshi movement had a remarkable response from the people and was very successful.

Events were happening which gave a fatal blow to whatever belief Indians may have had in the superiority of the West. The disaster that overtook the Italian army in 1894 at the hands of obscure Abyssinians was the first of the incidents. South African war had also been an inspiration to the Indians. The defeat of Russia at the hands of Japan produced a sense of pride in Indians. A small Asiatic power had defeated a European power which the British even were always afraid of and to resist whose imaginary invasion on India, millions of poor Indian tax-payer's money was being wasted from year to year. To a patriotic Indian when he

read of the complete overthrow of the Russian fleet, the vision of his own country came to him in an object form. She seemed to rise in front of him like a sad and desolate mother with over-wholming force. He began to say to himself because he could not yet muster courage to speak it aloud: "Could it not be that Britain like the all powerful autocratic Czar had feet of clay. If the Russian revolutionaries could challenge the mighty Czar, why could not Indians try to paralyse the British machinery. Interpretations of contemporary events and a reverent resurrection of ancient glory, combined to intensify a wide-spread desire to seek escape from foreign domination that had bound India body and soul. It was for the first time in 1903 that the voice of an extremist in Indian politics attracted attention. Babu Bipen Chander Pal disapproved the method of political agitation then in vogue. The Maharaja of Natore characterised constitutional agitation as "Political mendicancy." Mr. A. Chaudhari had said: "A subject race has no politics."

The first act of the nationalists was to oppose in the subjects committee a resolution of welcome to their Royal Highnesses, the Prince and Princess of Wales who were then on a visit to India. The lead in the opposition was taken by Lokmanya Tilak. Mr. Gokhale discouraged and resisted the move. Lokmanya Tilak did not succeed in persuading the leaders to drop that attitude of flattery and sycophancy. The resolution was carried and once again the leaders betrayed the cause of India and inflicted a grievous wound on the self-respect of their motherland.

Agitation as well as repression grew in volume and intensity. The annual session of the Bengal Provincial conference, held at Barisal under a Muslim president, was dispersed by Police by the orders of Sir Fuller. The division between the nationalists and the moderates grew steadily apace, and the situation so developed, by the autumn of 1906, that it became clear that the successful session of the Congress would only be possible if Dadabhoy then in England, and 81 years of age, could be persuaded to come out as president. He came and some compromise was made possible by the presence in the chair of the grand old man but it proved unhappy in the end. Lokmanya Tilak was the leader of forward thought. He did not believe in the constitutional methods of agitation which should remain within the four corners of the Law of British India. In the first place India had no Constitution. This Government was created by the statutes of British Parliament. In the second place India had no law-making powers. Bureaucracy could in one moment put an end to all form of

agitation. In fighting such an autocracy it was not always possible to follow the methods that would be legal. Not law, but justice, morality, and equity should be the guiding principles of agitation. Tilak therefore started a new party. Tilak once said: "We don't believe in philanthropy in politics. There is no instance in history where a foreign nation had ruled another without expectations. The old school thinks that concessions could be secured by logical persuasion. I don't pin my faith to this doctrine." Tilak taking advantage of the new spirit in the country wanted to break the old superstitions of the Congress. He wanted that Congressmen should devote their time to rouse the spirit of nationalism among the people, and abandon the mendicant policy of currying favour with the British Bureaucracy. The Congress must discard its holiday character, and develop into an organization, working continuously, and energetically, with full force and vigour.

His opponents as usual would not allow him to do this. He wanted the Congress Session held at Benares to pass separate resolutions on Swadeshi and Boycott and to advise all parts of India to inaugurate the boycott movement as a token of sympathy with Bengal. This the moderates stoutly refused to do. Tilak had become an all-India leader, and his name was proposed as president of next session of the Congress. Moderates were terrified. They thought that the Congress was in danger of being captured by the new party. According to Tilak, political rights will have to be fought for. The moderates think these can be won by petitions, prayers and persuasions. The nationalists think that these can only be got by power and pressure. The Congress was gradually and steadily shedding its earlier apologetic note. Gokhale had said: "Bureaucracy was growing frankly selfish and openly hostile to national aspiration." The ground was thus being prepared for a clear-cut, and defiant stand for freedom, claimed and fought for as a right, and not a reward humbly requested for good behaviour. The assertiveness of a peoples' long paralysed self-respect was becoming manifest. India was periodically desolated by calamities. There was no end to the woes of India in the words of Dadabhoy: "The British had reduced India to material and moral wretchedness." Lord Elgin visited Jubbulpore where people were dying like flies on account of famine and yet he congratulated the people on the prosperity of the province. He stated that India was conquered by sword and by the sword it shall be held. It was in his regime that seven plagues were, as it were, let loose on India,—famine, pestilence, earth quake, war and repression.

It was at the session held at Calcutta in 1906 that Dadabhoy

declared Swaraj to be the objective of the Congress and quoted the words of Sir Henry Campbell Bannermen: "Good Government could never be a substitute for Government by the people themselves." He said the whole matter could be comprised in one word--Self-Government or Swaraj like that of United Kingdom or colonies. Three distinct resolutions on Swadeshi, Boycott and National education were passed. According to the Calcutta resolution the boycott became a political weapon. The Congress declared that the boycott movement inaugurated in Bengal, by way of protest against the Partition of that province, was and is legitimate. There was a prolonged discussion leading to much excitement and commotion in the pandal regarding Swadeshi. Tilak's amendment that people of India should buy Swadeshi goods even at a sacrifice, though rejected in subjects committee, on his demanding a poll in the open house, was incorporated in the original resolution by the President.

The next session of the Congress was to be held at Nagpur. A reception committee was formed, majority, of whose members were Tilak's followers. Seeing that Tilak could not be elected as president, they lost all interest in the session. The venue was changed to Surat. The moderates had already decided to have Dr. Rash Behari Ghosh in the presidential chair. The Nationalists suggested the name of Lala Lajpat Rai who had been released on 11th November, 1907 but he was not willing to preside. Great confusion prevailed in the session. Shoes and lathis were freely employed. A shoe hit Sir Pheroze Mehta and Mr. Surender Nath Banerji. Dr. Ghosh attempted to read his address but all in vain. Dr. Ghosh's address contained certain offensive remarks against the Nationalists. This added fuel to the fire and roused party feelings very much. Lokmanya was against the split. He wanted to convert the Congress and not create any schism. He full well realised the strength of a united Congress and he advocated in his paper *Kesari*.

"Both the moderates and nationalists must remember that persons belonging to both the parties are actuated by a sincere desire to promote the welfare of the country and that neither is deliberately working to bring about the ruin of their country. Both the parties should realise that only in unity there is safety, and that this unity they have to keep in spite of differences of opinion. Neither should try to stamp out the other. The moderates should remember that it is because the new party has come into existence that the bureaucracy condescends to rally them."

Another extremist leader in politics was Shriyut Arubindo Ghosh who shone for some years as the brightest star on the Indian firmament. He has enriched India's literature which his writings which were in a fine literary garb, and always fiery in their political spirit and outlook. These were very much admired, and young men were inspired by them. His services to his country though for a brief span have earned for him an eternal name in the temple of Fame of politics of India. He was on the high skies only for a time.

Lokmanya Tilak was arrested on 13th July 1908 and he was sentenced to 6 years' transportation to which was added the half year remitted in 1897. New measures called the "Seditious Meetings Act" and the Press Act were passed in the teeth of popular opposition in 1908 and two years later the Criminal Law Amendment Act was passed. As a result of these repressive measures sedition disappeared from the land. It went underground and the bomb and revolver took its place.

Sporadic murders of a political nature were taking place. The violent movement was rapidly spreading to different provinces in India and had its support amongst a section of Indian students in London. The year 1911 was rendered memorable by the annulment of the partition of Bengal. The political tension was somewhat relaxed in 1915 but an attempt was made on the life of Lord Hardinge. A bomb was thrown at him and he narrowly escaped death while he was riding an elephant in the procession organised on entering Delhi the new capital. The Congress sent a telegram to Lord Hardinge expressing its indignation at the outrage. In 1914 the Great War broke out and Lord Hardinge depleted India of her soldiery. England was in great danger. The Indian Army saved the Allies from ruin. The marvellous feats of endurance and bravery displayed by the Indian troops in France and Flanders raised the Indians miles and miles higher in the estimation of Western nations. Since the war was being waged, Mahatma Gandhi had offered his services while in London to render aid to the wounded and had only been hindered by a very serious attack of pleurisy, he now offered again for the same service in India when his health was strong enough. He proposed to raise a corps of stretcher bearers and hospital assistants to tend the sick and wounded in the Mesopotamia campaign. Lord Hardings sent a cordial message to Mahatmaji but refused the generous offer. Mr. Asquith, Prime Minster, said. " We welcome with appreciation and affection India's proffered aid." The Congress based its appeal on these meritorious services to Britain at her hour of need

to grant the status of Dominion. The Congress sought and begged it as a reward, but Mrs. Beasant did not place the Indian probmle on the basis of a reward but on right. She said there had been talk of a reward of India's loyalty but India does not chaffer with the blood of her sons and the proud tears of her daughters for so much liberty. India claims it as a right. A birth right and an inalienable right. She demanded the application of the principle of Reciprocity at the Madras Congress urging that India should exclude imports from countries from which her people were excluded. She inaugurated her great Home Rule movement. The same old programme was reviewed. Swadeshi Boycott, National Education and Home Rule. Lord Pentland prohibited students from taking part in politics. Mrs. Beasant was interned. In the activities in which she had taken part in England and in India she had given evidence of her marvellous powers.

The new party did not care to join the Congress. Mr. Gokhale had passed away in 1915. Sir Pheroze Shah Mehta died in the same year. The controversy between the old and the new party was kept up, raging furiously, some time, and less ardently, at others, but always alive. Power had gone out of the moderates. The popular sentiment was in favour of Nationalists. This view gained ground that the reason for the ineffectiveness of the older leadership lay in their being denationalised and enamoured of Britain, its language, its dress its virtues and what not. Younger men full of energy, enthusiasm and zeal and had the ear of the masses, because they preached the replacement of the British Government by their own as the British Government was humiliating people, and treating them as inferior beings. In the country, as a whole, agitation was kept up almost at white heat. Mrs. Beasant's attempts to bring the moderates and nationalists together failed. Expectations were aroused in India that after the conclusion of the War a big step forward would be taken. Tilak who was restored to home and liberty soon after the outbreak of war appealed to his countrymen to render loyal support to England. By this time Mr. Tilak came back to the Congress with all his following. The position of older leaders became impossible and they left the Congress in 1917.

In 1916 Lord Chelmsford took up the subject of a fresh instalment of constitutional reforms. The scheme had the word " Timidity " written on every line of it.

Mr. Chamberlain, Secretary of State for India, suddenly quitted office for the discreditable inaptitude evidenced in the preparation for and conduct of military operations in Mesopotamia.

Mr. Montagu was then appointed the Secretary of State for India. He showed a keen interest in Indian affairs. He made a declaration on August 21, 1917 recognising Responsible Government as the goal of British policy in India. Indians would be eligible for commissioned ranks of the Army. The nationalists were of the view that the scheme should be rejected while moderates held that the best interests of the country required that the scheme should be supported and Mr. Montagu's hands strengthened.

Mrs. Beasant characterised the scheme as unworthy of England to offer and of India to accept. A special session of the Congress was held at Bombay which condemned the scheme as inadequate, unsatisfactory and disappointing. The moderates left the Congress and held a separate conference at Calcutta under the presidentship of Mr. Surender Nath Banerji. It welcomed the scheme as a whole, but suggested modifications and changes in it. A Liberal party was formed and the Congress passed into the hands of the Nationalists.

The Government of India Bill was more disappointing than the Report. The liberals went in deputation under the leadership of Mr. Surender Nath Banerji to give evidence on the bill before the Joint Select Committee. The Congress and the Home Rule league were represented by separate deputations. A conference between the representatives of the Congress and the Muslim League was duly held and the outcome was a complete agreement between the leaders of the two great communities. A joint Committee was appointed to frame a scheme. Hindu Muslim concord was almost finally hammered out and was approved by the Congress. Tilak joined the Congress in 1916 at Lucknow. He succeeded in securing a vast majority of the nationalists as delegates from Bombay Presidency and all the members elected for the Subject Committee belonged to his party so much that even Mahatma Gandhi's name was voted down, but Tilak declared him to be elected. The great achievement of Lucknow session was the completion of the Congress-League scheme of Reforms which was passed both by the Congress and the Muslim League. This session was a unique one for the fraternisation of Hindus and Muslims as well as for the formulation of a scheme of self-Government. The re-union of the two wings of the Congress which had been separated since 1907 was another outstanding feature of this session. The U. P. Government issued a warning to the Reception Committee, against any spirit of sedition in the Congress speeches and a copy of the letter was served upon the President-elect as well, through the Government of Bengal. The Reception Committee

gave a fitting reply to this gratuitous insult and the President treated it with the contempt it deserved. Some serious developments were apprehended but Sir James Meston, Lt.-Governor of U.P. and his wife attended the session and to the welcome extended to them by the President, Sir James gave a suitable reply. This was the state of political affairs in those days. Welcome was extended to the very same people who were bent upon killing the Congress.

The Home Rule idea was spreading like a wild fire. A large number of women joined the league and their uncalculating heroism, endurance and self-sacrifice considerably enhanced the power and prestige of the League. The Congress requested the Government to release Ali Bros. It also asked for being relieved of the burden of contributing 45 millions of Rupees for war purposes. A resolution offering welcome to the Prince of Wales was dropped because it was not consonant with India's self-respect. Such welcomes naturally infringed upon it.

And this brings us to the period when Mahatma Gandhi actively entered the arena of Indian politics to fight the battle of India's freedom with new methods. It was a break from the past and the whole policy and programme and *modus operandi* were entirely revolutionised. A great moral victory had been won by him in his passive resistance struggle in South Africa. General Smuts had signed an agreement just before the War

Mahatma Gandhi has had the unique power to revive this doctrine of Ahimsa in a modern form of passive resistance which brings it very closely, indeed, to the modern problems of disarimament and world peace. He had been able to explain by example in no less striking a manner, how the same teaching may help to solve the problem of untouchability, and also bring about Hindu-Muslim unity. With his dynamic personality these almost insoluble problems have been brought nearer solution. This is a Hindu tradition which has continued unbroken from ancient times and is all-prevailing even to day. It forms the background of Indian thought and every other movement that has reached India has been influenced by its eternal ideas. This tradition is that of Ahimsa. It means harmlessness, and love. It is the refusal to take life or injure any living creature. This sacred character of life of men, of beasts, trees and flowers, is found everywhere throughout India, wherever the Hindu tradition has prevailed. To Mahatma is the credit and honour, glory and gratitude, due for reviving this tradition and for translating it into practice. There comes a time when a united refusal is made to certain conditions offered and non-co-operation ensues. When compulsion is

used to force men to work, it is met with 'passive resistance'. The Mahatma has given this weapon of Satyagraha to India and the world. It implies the offering of non-violent moral resistance to wrong doing whereby the Satyagrahi is ready to go to prison or undertake any hardship, or suffering in order to undo the wrong. All the while, he is bound to serve the cause of truth in thought, word and deed and to bear no malice or hatred in his heart towards those who may cause him to suffer, or even put him in prison, or put him to death.

Its highest form is called Satyagraha, which may be translated Truth-force. He contemplates the finest moral action by a body of men and women, who are ready to suffer to the uttermost for the sake of what they hold to be truth and to die, if necessary, for the cause. One who does so is called a Satyagrahi. In political sphere this is called Civil Resistance. It must be truthful and non-violent in thought, word and deed and it must refuse to yield any help to the aggressor until the shameful decree is withdrawn. To use Tagore's expression he must never "bow the knee before an insolent knight."

Such a fine form of moral resistance is impossible without a high degree of discipline, courage, and endurance. For the final appeal is to the world-conscience, and if there is any flaw in the process and the Satyagraha offered is not fine the verdict will be unfavourable. The true Satyagrahi would do everything to convince the wrong-doer of his mistake and to move him by utter love, to repentance and as a last resort would refuse to co-operate with him so long as this wrong continued, thus breaking off relations with him and suffering the penalty for doing so. This would be done not in anger at all, but in unfailing and unceasing love. If carried out in the purest manner without bitterness or malice there is no more powerful weapon in the world than this. Christ the 'Prince of Satyagrahis' went to the cross rather than compromise with wrongs and yet on the cross prayed for those who did the wrong. The Sermon on the Mount was one of the teachings of scripture which suggested his way of moral resistance so akin to the Hindu doctrine of Ahimsa. Mahatma Gandhi has ceased altogether to use the phrase "Passive Resistance" as a name to describe his own method of moral war on deep-seated evil, because though an advocate of non-violence, he does not believe in that passivity which leads to feeble pusillanimous inaction. He says, if it is merely out of cowardice, or fear, that you did not use physical force against wrong doing and not out of moral conviction than you had better take up weapons and either kill or

CHAPTER IX

Congress Year By Year

FIRST SESSION—1885

INSTEAD of Poona, where it was intended to be held because of outbreak of cholera, this session was held in Bombay in 1885. Mr. W. C. Bonnerji presided. It was attended by 72 delegates.

The aims and objects of the Congress were defined by the President.

(*a*) The promotion of personal intimacy, and friendship amongst all the more earnest workers in our country's cause in various parts of the Empire.

(*b*) The eradication, by direct friendly, personal, intercourse of all possible race, creed, or provincial prejudices amongst all lovers of our country and the fuller development and consolidation of those sentiments of national unity that had their origin in their beloved Lord Ripon's ever memorable reign.

(*c*) The authoritative record after this has been carefully elicited by the fullest discussion of the matured opinions of the educated classes in India, on some of the more important and pressing of the social questions of the day.

(*d*) The determination of the lines upon and methods by which during the next twelve months it is desirable for native politicians to labour in the public interest.

Mr. W. C. Bonnerji was one of the greatest leaders of the Calcutta Bar. He was distinguished by uncommon power of judgment. It was indeed a signal honour that he was called upon to preside at the opening session of the National Congress. In his presidential address he emphasised the importance and compre-

hensiveness of the Congress and claimed it as being representative of the whole of India because of community of sentiments and feelings and wants.

He further said : "Our desire to be governed according to the ideas of Government prevalent in Europe was in no way incompatible with our thorough loyalty to the British Government. All that we desired was that the basis of the Government should be widened and that the people should have their proper and legitimate share in it."

In all nine resolutions were passed.

The first asked for a Royal Commission to enquire into the working of Indian Constitution.

The second demanded abolition of the India Council. The third dealt with defects of the legislative councils in which all the members were nominated. The fourth prayed for the simultaneous examinations for the I.C.S. and the raising of the age of candidates. The 5th and 6th dealt with military expenditures. The 7th protested against the annexation of Upper Burma and the proposed incorporation of it with India. The 8th advised the sending of resolutions to political associations to be discussed and passed all over the country. The 9th resolution fixed the next Congress at Calcutta on 28th December, 1886.

In view of the present position of Burma in relation to India it is interesting and instructive to recall that the first Congress tackled this question and protested that Burma should share the same fate as India if it is made a part and parcel of this subject country and hence that protest was most reasonable. Such was the manner in which was launched the 'good ship' of the Congress more in the interests of the British Raj than for the good of India.

One feels today that these professions of loyalty and this solicitude for the British power and interests are quite out of touch with the realities of the situtation. Life was far less organized then, and English-educated leaders were neither in touch with the people, who really matter nor were bold enough to speak truth and nothing but truth. The bulk of the Indian opinion in the Congress was in favour of British rule. There was almost a child-like and pathetic belief in the fairplay of the British Nation and its Parliament.

Many fondly and wrongly believed that the British people were the very people on earth who will give them what is right and just.

SECOND SESSION—1886

This session was held at Calcutta in 1886 under the presidentship of Dadabhoy Naoroji who was later styled as the grand old man of India.

The Parsees have provided a very remarkable array of Congress leaders and he was the first and foremost of them. Dadabhoy had the unique distinction of creating organized public life in India for 40 years before the birth of Congress. He continued to be the one undisputed leader of Nationalist India for 21 years longer. He wrote a monumental work " Poverty and un British rule in India. The drain of wealth from India was the central theme of Dadabhoy Naroji's innumerable discourses on Indian affairs. It was he, more than any other who laid constant stress upon the manifold evils of political subjection. For 61 years both in England and in India he served the motherland with undeviating purpose, with complete selflessness and with vitality of faith which would put to shame younger men. He was the most moderate leader to start with, but in the latter part of his career continued disappointments drove him to employ language marked by great and increasing bitterness. His life was the loftiest ideal his countrymen could set before themselves in those days.

He presided over the Congress thrice in 1886, 1893 and 1906. He was the first Indian to be elected as a member of the House of Commons. To him belongs the credit of defining the goal of India as Swaraj (Self-Government). Dadabhoy lived and laboured and left behind him the noble example of a dedicated life. His grand daughters are maintaining the noble traditions created by him.

In his presidential address he said:

"The assemblage of such a Congress is an event of the utmost importance in Indian History. We the educated classes have become the true interpreters and mediators between the masses of our countrymen and our rulers. Is this Congress a nursery for sedition and rebellion against the British Government? (Cries of 'no' 'no') or is it another stone in the foundation of the stability of that Government? (Cries of 'yes' 'yes').

" Is it possible that an assembly like this every one of whose membe-s is fully impressed with the knowledge of blessings of British rule could meet for any purpose inimical to that rule to which we owe so much. The thing is absurd. Let us proclaim that we are loyal to the backbone (cheers).

"Any idea of the subversion of British power is abhorrent.

"A National Congress must confine itself to questions in which the entire nation has a direct participation and it must leave the adjustments of social reforms and other class questions to class Congresses.

"We are very poor, and hence it has become the right as well as the duty of this Congress to set forth its convictions both as to this widespread destruction and primary steps needful for its alleviation.

"I am hopeful that if we are true to ourselves, and if we do justice to ourselves, and the noble education which has been given to us and if we speak freely we may fairly expect our Government to listen to us, and to grant us our reasonable demands."

Among the acquisitions of that year were Mr. Surender Nath Bannerji and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya.

Lord Dufferin invited all the delegates of the Congress session in Calcutta to his garden party as distinguished visitors.

The second session of the Congress elaborated a scheme of council reforms asking for 50% elected strength. This session declared that giving power to Sessions Judges and High Courts of setting aside the verdicts of Juries was an injurious innovation and requested for its immediate cancellation.

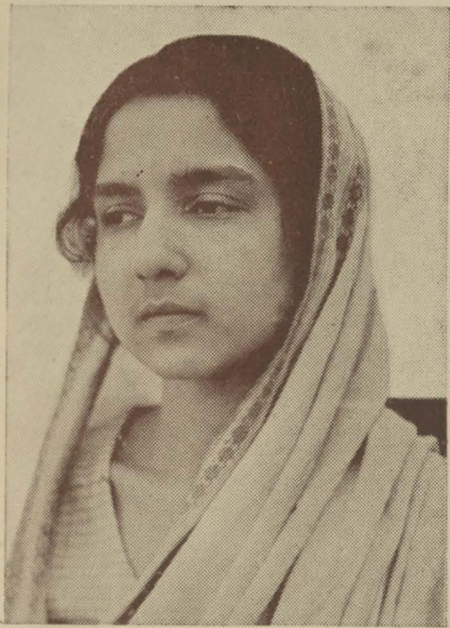
Complete separation of Judicial and Executive functions was demanded.

THIRD SESSION—1887

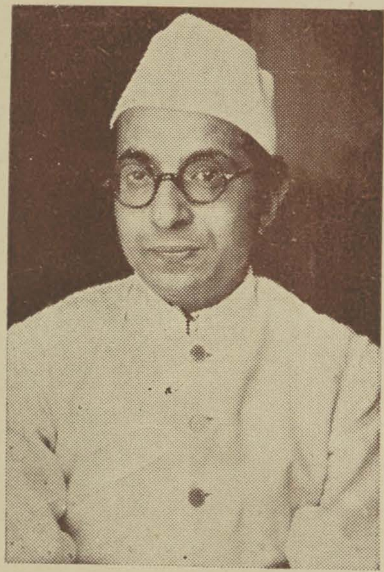
It was held at Madras in 1887. It had its first Muslim president Mr. and afterwards Justice Badr-ud-Din Tyebji who was a staunch Congressman.

The chairman of the Reception Committee was one of the greatest of Indian statesmen Raja Sir T. Madhav Rao who described the Congress as the soundest triumph of British administration and a crown of glory of the British nation. Mr. Eardley Norton joined the Congress and he was stigmatised by his countrymen, as a veiled seditionist to which he replied as follows: "If it be sedition to rebel against all wrong, if it be sedition to insist that people should have a fair share in the administration of their own country and affairs, if it be sedition to resist class tyranny to raise any voice against oppression, to mutiny against injustice to insist upon a hearing before sentence, to

THE IRREPRESSIBLES AND INVINCIBLES!



Aruna Asaf Ali



Yusuf Mehar Ali



A HAPPY DINNER

uphold the liberties of the individual, to vindicate our common right to gradual but ever advancing reform, if this be sedition I am rightly glad to be called a seditionistand doubly aye, trebly glad when I look around me to know, and feel, that I am ranked as one, among such a magnificent array of seditionists."

In his address he laid stress on the representative character of the Congress and asserted its loyalty. He failed to understand why Mussalmans should not work shoulder to shoulder with their fellow countrymen of other religions and creeds for the common benefit of all. He said that in the opinion of all men of light and leading, and educated, and acquainted with the history of their country the English Government is so bad, that it has deserved to forfeit the confidence and loyalty of all the intelligentsia. I have not the slightest doubt that this is also the view held by the leaders of the Mussalman Community throughout India."

Sir Syed Ahmad made a speech at Lucknow in 1887 when the Congress was in session and among other things he stated that the English Government was better for Mohammedans than a Hindu Government. If the English were to leave India a civil war would be inevitable, to decide who should be the next ruler. His speech gave evidence of the Mohammedans' contempt for the unwarlike Bengalis who were the main support of the Congress. The English, he declared, had conquered India and must remain in India in the interests of peace. No victorious nation had ever granted self-determination and political freedom to subject peoples. Such a thing ought not therefore to be demanded of the English. God had sent the English to India and established them as rulers. They must therefore be obeyed."

The Congress Session was a success. It was held in a specially erected pandal. 607 delegates attended the session. Usual resolutions were passed. Emphasis was laid on separation of judicial and executive functions, even if doing so involved an extra expenditure.

Lord Connemara, Governor of Madras, attended reception given by Mr. Eardley Norton and received the delegates at the Government House.

FOURTH SESSION

This was held in 1888 at Allahabad under the Presidentship of Mr. George Yule the first British president.

The Congress continued to grow in strength. It aroused more opposition this year than before. There was a combination

of Sir Auckland Colvin and Sir Syed Ahmad. The latter gave a definite lead to his co-religionists to keep aloof from the Congress, and founded the Anglo-Muslim Defence Association. The opposition, however, produced a wholesome effect on the public mind and the session was more successful than the preceding ones, Pandit Ayodhia Nath was at the head of the Reception Committee and roused the people by his fiery eloquence. He was ready to hold the Congress at any cost, wholly at his own expense, if necessary.

Sheikh Raza Hussain Khan in supporting the election of Mr. Yule as President of the session, produced a *fatwa* from the spiritual leader of Sunnis supporting the Congress and declared that it was not the Muslims, but their official masters, who were opposed to the Congress.

Mr. Yule delivered a remarkable address. Here are some extracts:

"All movements of the nature of the Congress pass through several phases as they run their course. The first is one of ridicule. That is followed, as the movement progresses, by one of abuse which is usually succeeded by partial concession, and misapprehension of aim, accompanied by warnings against taking big jumps into the unknown. The final stage of all is a substantial adoption of the object of the movement, with some expression of surprise that it was not adopted before. These various phases overlap each other but between the first and the last there is a complete distinction

" We desire no sudden snapping of existing ties. We ask only for the loosening of the bonds. The House of Commons regards India as a great and solemn trust committed to it by an All-wise and Inscrutable Providence. They have thrown the trust back again upon the hands of Providence to be looked after as Providence thinks best."

Sir Auckland Colvin placed several obstacles in the way of the Reception Committee. Maharaja Darbhanga bought a castle and placed it at the disposal of the Reception Committee for holding the session. 1248 delegates attended. Usual resolutions were passed. A committee of enquiry was demanded to go into the Police administration which was declared to be highly unsatisfactory and oppressive. It was decided that no subject shall be pressed for discussion by the Subjects Committee, for the introduction of which Hindu and Muslim delegates, as a body object unanimously.

This session offered co-operation with Indian well-wishers who in England were putting forth exertions for the total abrogation of laws and rules relating to the regulation of prostitution by the states in India. It was pointed out, that over 2,000 Indian women, were procured by Government, for this hideous purpose.

An active policy of Technical education and development of Industrial enterprise was requested for.

FIFTH SESSION

It was held in 1889 in Bombay, Sir William Wedderburn presiding. The outstanding feature of the Congress was that Mr. Bradlaugh attended this session. He came to India with the combined prestige of his platform eloquence, and his unique parliamentary record.

Charles Bradlaugh at this time threw his whole weight into the cause of the Congress, and his influence gave the Indian agency the necessary stimulus which it had lacked before. He became the champion of the National Congress in the British Parliament. The Congress submitted a complete scheme to Mr. Bradlaugh with a request that he would cause a bill to be drafted on the lines therein indicated, and that he would introduce this at the earliest possible moment into the House of Commons as the Congress proposal. Mr. Bradlaugh introduced it in 1890. But the Government, in order to forestall this, introduced a bill of its own.

This double event, however, ensured for the Congress a much larger measure of publicity, than it had so far been able to command. The popular welcome in Bombay was accompanied by scenes such as had been witnessed only on the historic occasion of Lord Ripon's departure. It was royal in its style and more than royal in its cordiality.

Sir William Wedderburn was a member of the Indian Civil Service. On retirement in 1887, he associated himself with the Congress. To him belongs the credit of running the British Congress Committee for years for the expenses of which the Congress had been voting sums ranging from Rs. 10,000 to Rs. 50,000 annually. For more than 30 years the Indian National Congress was the master concern of his public life. Its activities and aims were never out of his thoughts. Wedderburn in his presidential address referred to his quarter century of official service. He said, " I have been in the service of the people of India and have eaten

their salt, and I hope to devote to their service, what still remains to me of active life. He enumerated the obstacles he had to encounter in England, in carrying on the Congress work there. He deprecated the blindness of the Government in resenting the criticisms and suggestions of the Congress for the man who points out the rocks and shoals towards which the ship is moving, is the friend of the captain not the enemy."

He said "I think poor India is very fortunate in securing such a champion as Mr. Charles Bradlaugh, whose sledge-hammer blows have often shaken to their foundations the citadels of prejudice, ignorance and oppression."

At the conclusion of the Congress, addresses were presented to Mr. Bradlaugh on behalf of all parts of the country. Mr. Bradlaugh said, in the course of a memorable oration: "For whom should I work if not for the people ? Born of the people, trusted by the people, I will die of the people, and I know no geographical or race limitations.

Curiously enough the number of delegates was 1889. Usual resolutions were passed.

A formal resolution was passed confirming the appointment of the British Committee. A number of prominent leaders were appointed at the same time to conduct a campaign in England. Their names were Pheroze Shah Mehta and Surender Nath Bannerji, W. C. Bonnerji and there were five Englishmen. A sum of Rs. 45,000 was raised to cover their expenses.

Mr. Gokhale joined the Congress for the first time in that year. He made a speech which led to a prophecy that he was the future president of the Congress.

SIXTH SESSION

It was held at Calcutta in 1890, Sir Pheroze Shah Mehta presiding. He was one of the stalwart politicians of his time, and he was a staunch believer in the ideals of the Congress.

The Government of Bombay passed an amendment to the land revenue code in 1901 in the teeth of bitter opposition. There was an organized walk-out from the Council led by Sir Pheroze Shah Mehta.

In his presidential address he said: "To my mind a Parsi is a true Parsi, a Mohammedan or Hindu is a better Mohammedan or Hindu, the more he is attached to the land which gave him

birth, the more he is bound in brotherly relations and acttached to all the children of the soil. Ours is a prayer of a rising, growing, and hopeful nation."

The Secretary to the Governor of Bengal returned the visitors' tickets sent to him by the Reception Committee saying that orders of the Government of India prohibited the presence of Government servants at its meetings. It was resolved to hold a session of the Congress in London. A Congress deputation headed by Messrs Surender Nath Bannerji and W. C. Bonnerji was to go to England to represent the Congress demands. Usual resolutions were repeated.

SEVENTH SESSION

This session was held in 1891 at Nagpur, and was presided over by Mr. P. Ananda Charlu. He was a shining light of the South Indian political firmament for nearly two decades and was a man of unfailing independence. He was a notable personality with a forceful eloquence all his own. He described the India council "as the oligarchy of fossilised Indian administrators who were superannuated for service in India."

He made a stirring speech· "Take the case of volunteers. We are excluded from enrolment. Armenians, Negroes, West Africans, Mulattoes and non-descripts of humanity who infest the back slums of Calcutta are all eligible as volunteers. These are the defenders of our hearths and homes. These are invidious distinctions and must disappear. These are opposed to the spirit of that law which is higher than all human laws, the law of nature which is engraved on the hearts and conscience of the people of this country."

This Congress urged that Government should conciliate Indian public opinion, encourage and qualify the Indians to defend their homes and the Government. It demanded relaxation of the rules under the Arms Act, the organization throughout the country of a militia and the establishment of military colleges and a system of volunteering. The Congress demanded the separation of judicial and executive functions. The Congress protested against the extinguishing of immemorial rights of the ryot which had revolutionised the society. It protested against forest laws which had imposed severe hardships on the villagers. In these years the foremost subject, before the Congress, was the expansion and reform of the legislative councils. The Congress reiterated its conviction that India could not be governed well until the people

were allowed through their elected representatives a potential voice in the legislature.

EIGHTH SESSION

This was held at Allahabad in 1892. It was presided over by Mr. W. C. Bonnerji, who had presided at the first session of the Congress.

He referred in his presidential address, to the reasons for the non-interference by the Congress with social questions. We quote below a striking passage from his address: "Is our voice not to be listened to because forsooth to that voice has not been added the voice of our European fellow-subjects. But apart from that why is our voice to be despised? It is we who feel the pinch. It is we who have to suffer and when we cry out it is said to us. 'Oh, we cannot listen to you. Yours is a contemptible and useless and a vile agitation and we will not listen to you." Time was when if we natives of the country agitated about any matter with the help of non-official Europeans the apologists of the Government used to say triumphantly!" "This agitation is not the agitation of the natives of the country, but has been got up by a few discontented Europeans. Don't listen to them, it is not their true voice, it is the voice of those Europeans" And now we are told: 'Don't listen to them, it is their own voice, and not the voice of Europeans!"

The usual resolutions were repeated.

Lala Murlidhar who was later styled as a grand old man of the Punjab made a stirring speech:

"You! You, it seems, are content to join with those accursed monsters in battening on the hearts' blood of your brethren (Cries of 'no' 'no'). I say, yes, look round, what are these chandeliers and lamps, and European made chairs, and tables, and smart clothes, and hats, and English coats, and bonnets, and frocks, and silver mounted canes, and all the luxurious fittings of your houses but trophies of Indian's misery, monuments of Indian's starvation. Every rupee you have spent on Europe-made articles is a rupee of which you have robbed your poor brethren, honest handicraftsmen who can now no longer earn a living. Of course, it was a pure philanthropy which flooded India with English-made goods and, surely and slowly, killed out every indigenous industry, fine philanthropy which, to facilitate this, repealed the import duties and flung away three crores a year of a revenue, which the rich paid, and to bal-

ance this wicked sacrifice raised the Salt Tax which the poor pay; which is now pressing factory regulations on us to kill, if possible, the one tiny new Industrial departure India could boast of. Oh yes ! it is all philanthropy but the result is that your brethren are starving. Not 30 years ago, wheat was available at the rate of $1\frac{1}{2}$ maunds per rupee, and gram 2 maunds for a rupee, for our grain was not exported to foreign lands. Now it is six times as dear and six times as hard for the poor to fill their bellies because our philanthropists have conjured up the phantasm of free trade to drain our granaries. Free trade, free play, between these two nations ! How I hate the sham! What fair play in trade can there be between impoverished India, and the bloated capitalist England ? As well talk of a fair fight between an infant and a grown-up man, a rabbit and a boa-constrictor. No doubt it is all in accordance with high economic science, but my friends remember this—this, too, is starving your brethren.

NINTH SESSION

This session was held in 1893 at Lahore under the presidentship of Dadabhoy Naoroji. He was the first Indian to be elected member of the British Parliament. Sirdar Dyal Singh Majithia was the Chairman of the Reception Committee.

Dadabhoy Naoroji was accorded a very enthusiastic and warm reception, so far unprecedented and unequalled. That was the first Congress that was being held in the Punjab. There was much enthusiasm, and there were very promising and hopeful signs of political activity in the province which was deemed to be rather backward, because of the Mohammedans being in a majority who had not associated themselves with the Congress and due to the policy of the local bureaucracy being reactionary, harsh, tyrannical and repressive.

At this time the Congress leaders were chiefly concerned with obtaining political favours, for their own educated classes, and rebutting the insult and contempt which was levelled at them by Englishmen, who treated them as inferiors. There was extraordinarily little thought of the exploitation which was going on all the while, and the ever-increasing misery and poverty of the people. It was only the genius of Dadabhoy Naoroji and his marvellous insight that drew the attention of the public to the true meaning of the British connection, in relation to the growing poverty of India that brought the economic issue into prominence. This subject then took its rightful place in the minds of political spokesmen. Dadabhoy was not only India's first great statesman

but also the first Indian Economist who laid the foundation of an Indian school of economic thought.

Finance in Great Britain began to regard India more as a profitable market for investment than anything else.

Indians, with very rare exceptions, had failed to appreciate the manner in which their country was being utilised for England's benefit and the way in which British capital was being encouraged, while Indian savings were allowed to lie idle and were not utilised for great public works which were being built.

The following are some of the extracts from his presidential address :

"I am much pleased that I have the privilege of presiding at the very first Congress held in Punjab. I have taken some interest in the material condition of the Punjab. On Punjab rests a double responsibility : one external and one internal.

" Punjabees are a warrior and a manly race, and love of justice and generosity are their marked characteristics. I deem it an offence and insult to the Punjabees to say that they are unpatriotic and selfish and that they are preventing the general progress of all India.

"The effect which your labours produced on the minds of the people, has helped me (an Indian) to find my way into the Parliament.

" With all that has been done by the Congress, we have only begun our work. We have yet much and very much more work to do, till that political, moral and material condition is attained by us which will raise us to the level of our British fellow-citizens in prosperity and political elevation. Out future is promising and hopeful.

"But the greater question before you is the poverty of India. This will be the great future trouble both of the Indian people and of the British rulers. This question should be fully raised, grappled and settled.

You know that I had calculated the average of the income as being Rs. 20 per head per annum. How wretched is the condition of a country of such meagre income, after a hundred years of the most costly administration ; and can such a thing last ? The present Trade System between England and India is unnatural, and destructive to us. It is beneficial to the United Kingdom and extremely harmful for us. We have a large costly European Army and European Civil Services. Are not these European services especially imposed upon us, only for the clearly admitted, and declared ground, of maintaining the British power ?

"The main underlying principle and the desire of my heart is to promote, as far as I can, good fellow-feeling among all my countrymen, I wish that all educated and thinking men and all true friends of our own country will continue to do all that lies in their power to bring about stronger and stronger friendly ties of common nationality, fellow-feelings amongst the whole people of our country. Let us always remember that we are all children of our mother country. I have never worked in any other spirit than this, that I am an Indian. I am above all an Indian. Our country is India. Our Nationality is Indian.

"I desire now to impress upon my countrymen, with all the earnestness I am capable of, to prepare themselves for the sacrifices.

"Your welcome to me was an extraordinary one in warmth and grandeur. Is there any reward more grand and more gratifying than the esteem, the joy with my joy, the sorrow with my sorrow and, above all, the unshaken confidence of my fellow countrymen and countrywomen of our grand and beloved country?

"My last prayer and exhortation to the Congress and my countrymen is, 'Go on united and earnest, in concord and harmony, with moderation, with loyalty to the British rule, and patriotism towards your country, and the success is sure to attend your efforts for your just demands.'"

In this session Pt. Madan Mohan Malviya made a forceful speech :

"Where are the weavers? Where are those men who lived by different industries and manufactures, and where are the manufactures which were sent to Europe in very large quantities year after year? All that has become a thing of the past. Every one sitting here is clothed in the cloth of British make, and wherever you go, you find British manufactures and British goods staring you in the face. All that is left to the people is to drag out a miserable existence by agricultural operations and make infinitesimal profit out of the little trade left to them. In the matter of the services, in the matter of trade, our people are not enjoying one-hundredth of the part of the profit and gain which they used to enjoy fifty years ago. How then is it possible for the country to be happy?"

TENTH SESSION

This was held in Madras in 1894 under the presidentiship of Mr. Webb, M. P. He was a warm-hearted and reflective Irish

Member of the British Parliament in deep sympathy with Indian aspirations. He was an active member of the British Committee. Speaking of him Sir William Wedderburn said:

"Mr. Webb has done a very good service to the Congress. He has visited India as a messenger of peace and goodwill. He has been a sort of dove out of the ark and those who have heard his words of wisdom and gentleness may add that he has brought an olive branch in his mouth."

Extracts from the Presidential address:

"You stand at the most critical period of a peoples' history. Your populations heretofore supine are awakening to consciousness and new hopes.

"I was nurtured in the conflict against slavery. My country is the world. My countrymen are all mankind. I am a friend of civil and religious liberty all over the world. I hate tyranny and repression. In our efforts for reform and constitutional liberty much will depend upon individual character, and training, upon the extent to which we wisely administer the powers we have. Politics are amongst the most ennobling, moral, comprehensive spheres of human activity, and none should be excluded from their exercise. The political atmosphere which we here hope to breathe must be free of greed, lust, or ambition. We desire not only the brotherhood of men, but the brotherhood and sisterhood of men and women.

"Nothing is more striking, in considering the condition of India than its poverty compared with the wealth of the rest of the world. The mean annual income per head in the United Kingdom is about Rs. 500, while in India it is Rs. 20.

"I regret that in India the expenditure on Army is much more than on Education.

"You yourselves are taking up the work which you and you alone can ultimately perfect, that is, the eradication by direct friendly intercourse, of all possible race, creed or national prejudices amongst all lovers of your country.

"Within the life-time of a generation you have obtained in India what may be regarded as the first instalment of reform, in the direction of the expansion and reconstruction of the legislative councils, which cost other countries centuries of toil and effort. You have many reasons to be proud of what you have achieved in other directions also. Confident are we that through all storm and cloud the sun of constitutional liberty will yet shine with pure and beneficent effulgence upon India and this future depends

more upon yourselves than upon any political chambers. Before all, you must cultivate a spirit of generous toleration and of charity between class and class, creed and creed."

Resolutions:

Protested against positive disabilities imposed upon Indians regarding high posts.

It condemned the excise duty on the cotton manufactured in British India, and put on record its firm conviction that in imposing this excise duty the interests of India have been sacrificed to those of Lancashire.

It thanked the Government for its liberal spirit in giving effect to the India Council Act, but also pointed out material alterations considered necessary, if real effect was to be given to the Act. It also reiterated the demand for a Council for the Punjab. The resolution in support of simultaneous examinations of I.C.S. passed by the House of Commons was acclaimed by the Congress.

The Congress demanded the fulfilment of pledges given by the Secretary of State for a permanent settlement.

An earnest appeal was made to investigate the hardships created by Forest Laws. The rules made by the Punjab Government were particularly cruel and unjust, very arbitrary and unworthy of a civilised Government.

That recruitment for higher judiciary should be from the Bar and repeal of the Government of India's notification relating to the Press in Indian States was demanded.

ELEVENTH SESSION

This session was held at Poona in 1895 under the presidentship of Mr. Surender Nath Bannerji. He was the leading figure among the public men of Bengal and India. He was Editor of *Bengalee* which was a weekly for 17 years, and then expanded into a daily. He joined the Indian National Congress at its second session held at Calcutta in 1886. Whoever might be the president, he was the central figure, session after session. He was a great orator. Sir Henry Cotton wrote of him: "From Multan to Chittagong Surrender Nath Bannerji could, by the power of tongue, raise a revolt or suppress a rebellion."

He twice presided over the Congress, and on both occasions, performed a marvellous feat of memory by delivering very long addresses, correct to a word and all without any reference to the

printed address. He is one of the makers of India. He was one of the first ministers in Bengal under Mr. Montagu's Act and justified himself in that capacity by restoring to Calcutta Municipality the right of self-government of which it had been deprived in 1899. His is one of the names which must always be highly respected in any account of the political and national progress of India. He was the ' Trumpet Voice of India '. For the command of language, for for elegance of diction, for a rich imagery, for emotional heights, for a spirit of manly challenge, his orations are hard to beat. They remain unapproachable. His voice resounded and reached the farther recesses of the civilised world but this is very disapponting that his speeches were full of praise for England's love of liberty and freedom and betrayed a deplorable lack of self-respecting nationalism and independence in thought and judgment. He was lathi-charged at Barisal during Lord Minto's Viceroyalty. He was once convicted and fined.

Sir William Wedderburn said about him :

" He is a journalist, an educationist, and a political agitator. He is a many-sided man. As editor of the *Bengalee* he is recognised as a trust-worthy journalist, as founder and head of the Ripon College; he is appreciated as a brilliant educationist. Some people regard all agitators as mischievous persons. You should remember the angel at the Pool of Bethseda. He was an agitator who troubled the waters, but the result was good, not bad. Such an agitator is our friend Mr. Surender Nath Bannerji. His mission is one of an angel to promote peace and goodwill between India and England."

Extracts from the Presidential address :

"I can conceive of no higher honour, no loftier trust no more exalted dignity, than that to which you have summoned me by your united suffrage. The highest reward for a public man next to the approbation of his own conscience, is the confidence of his fellow countrymen. But great as the honour is, far higher is the responsibility which belongs to it.

"However much we may love and respect our ladies we don't think they are yet qualified for representative government.

"The Congress is enshrined in the hearts of the educated community of India. It excites their deepest reverence, stirs their most earnest enthusiasm. It is the God of their idolatry. It is immediately bound up with and forms part and parcel of the life of New India.

"The Congress owes a heavy debt of gratitude to Mr. Justice

Ranade, secretary of the social conference who by his conciliatory attitude averted a crisis which might have proved disastrous to the best interests of the Congress. It is the Congress of united India, of Hindus, of Mohammedans, of Christians, Parsees and Sikhs, of those who would reform their social customs, and those who would not. Here we stand upon a common platform, here we have agreed to bury our social and religious differences, and recognise the one common fact, that living under the same Government, and the same political institutions, we have common rights and common grievances.

"We are still exposed to the taunts and jeers of our opponents ; we are still regarded as a set of impracticable people.

There is another agency impalpable and invisible, noiselessly advancing onwards amid the din of our strifes, towards the accomplishment of its own hidden purposes. That agency is Time. Time present and future, is our ally. A golden age is looming in the future. There is a golden age in store for us, and our children. The past ought to encourage us the future ought to stir us with enthusiasm. The noblest heritage which we can leave to children is the heritage of our extended rights.

"The usual resolutions were passed. The Congress demanded a place for Indians in the Executive Councils of Bombay and Madras.

The famine of 1895-96 made Tilak restless. The indifference of the Government and the help lessness of his countrymen shocked him. Tilak carried on the agitation in a systematic way infused courage and manliness into the people. The Government looked upon Tilak's organised agitation, with consternation and so failed to make use of his co-operation. In 1895 a controversy arose as to whether the social conference should be held in the Congress pandal or not. The Reformers insisting that it should be held there and the Orthodox party opposing the proposal. The former went to the extreme length of saying that the holding of the conference in the Congress mandap was a necessary condition for their giving financial support to the Congress, the latter were also uncompromising. The result was a serious split in the Congress camp. Tilak led the orthodox party. He said that the dispute should be decided either by the Congress or the Reception Committee.

Mr. Surender Nath Bannerji tackled the problem in a tactful manner and said that he would not preside if the question of holding the social conference in the Congress mandap was not

set aside. Contrary to all expectations the Congress was a splendid success

TWELFTH SESSION

The 12th session was held in 1896 at Calcutta and was presided over by Mr. Sayani. He was the 2nd Muslin President. In his address he made a statement in regard to the position of Muslims in India which is the most comprehensive and impartial treatment of the subject. He said, " The orgin of the Congress was thus an epoch in the history of the country and with the establishment of the Congress, began a new era in the political history of India. Keeping aloof from the Congress is not only undesirable but may even merit censure."

" The Congress has a cosmopolitan character. It is representative of all the communities of this great empire, Hindus, Mohammedans, Parsis and others. It is not a party organisation or a political caucus, but an assembly, representative of the light and leading of this empire, dealing with public matters, and serving public interests, in a broad and catholic spirit with a view not of supplanting, as is often erroneously, and absurdly, alleged but of supporting the Government of this country.

Mussalmans with benefit to themselves and consistently with Mussalman interests, even assuming the Mussalman interests as unthinkingly alleged are in conflict with the rest of the Indians can and ought to take part in this national movement.

Indians are a poor people, they are over-taxed, the civil and military expenditure of India is excessive and the drain from India is of a ruinous character.

Lord Lawrence said. " The mass of the people are so miserably poor that they have barely the means of subsistence."

Mr. Bright said.

The cultivators of the soil, the great body of the population of India are in a condition of great impoverishment, of great dejection, and of a great suffering."

The following are some of the resolutions which were passed in that session.

1. A sum of Rs. 60,000 was voted for the British Committee and 'India.'

2. Financial independence of Provinces was demanded.

3. Re-organisation of the educational services so as to do justice to Indians was requested.

THIRTEENTH SESSION

This session was held at Amraoti in 1897. Mr. M. C. Sankarn Nair presided. He was held high in public esteem. He was a member of the Viceroy's Executive Council and this high office he resigned to make his protest against the reactionary, repressive and tyrannical policy. adopted by Lord Chelmsford during the Martial Law regime.

Extracts from the Presidential address :

" This country was passing through a terrible ordeal. Poverty which may be said to be the normal condition of our masses deepened into famine. In Bombay Presidency it was followed by plague, a terrible disease, which claimed a heavy percentage of deaths ! The soldiers who were employed to enforce precautionary measures were said to have insulted women, and defiled places of worship. The result was prostration of the people. Some resigned to sullen apathy and despair. A feeling of helplessness came over them. But there were a few who protested against these Government measures, pointing out their unnecessary harshness. Amongst those who protested was Mr. Natu, a leading Poona Sardar.

"India expects great things from us The whole civilised world is watching the changes coming over us. Shall we be content to leave India as it is, or shall we go on and do all in our power to lift it to a higher level? Years of subjection, nay we may even say servitude, have sapped the strength of the Indian Nation, dwarfed its growth, and deprived it of all that was great and noble in it, and if India is ever to occupy a better position than she fills, at the present moment, and take her proper place in the scale of nations, it must be entirely due to efforts of her educated and enlightened sons. Let 'nil desparandum' be our motto. Let not insidious smile or angry frown deter us from following the straight path of duty, and with the welfare and progress of our land as our end, and aim, let us endeavour under a solemn sense of responsibility, as well as loyalty to our country to bring about the glorious future which must inevitably crown our efforts."

In the autumn of 1896 Plague made its first appearance in India. In 1897 it raged furiously in Poona. The Government appointed Plague Committee with Mr. Rand at its head. He put British soldiers on the duty of making house to house search. Their behaviour caused great offence and annoyance to the people. Tilak pointed out to the authorities, but they did not take any notice of it. People were so exasperated that Mr. Rand was murdered on

Queen's birthday by Mr. Chapekar and with him was killed Lt. Averst. These murders spread a feeling of horror. Tilak was suspected. His foes cleverly exploited these murders to undermine his influence and discredit his activities. The Government embarked upon a campaign of organized repression.

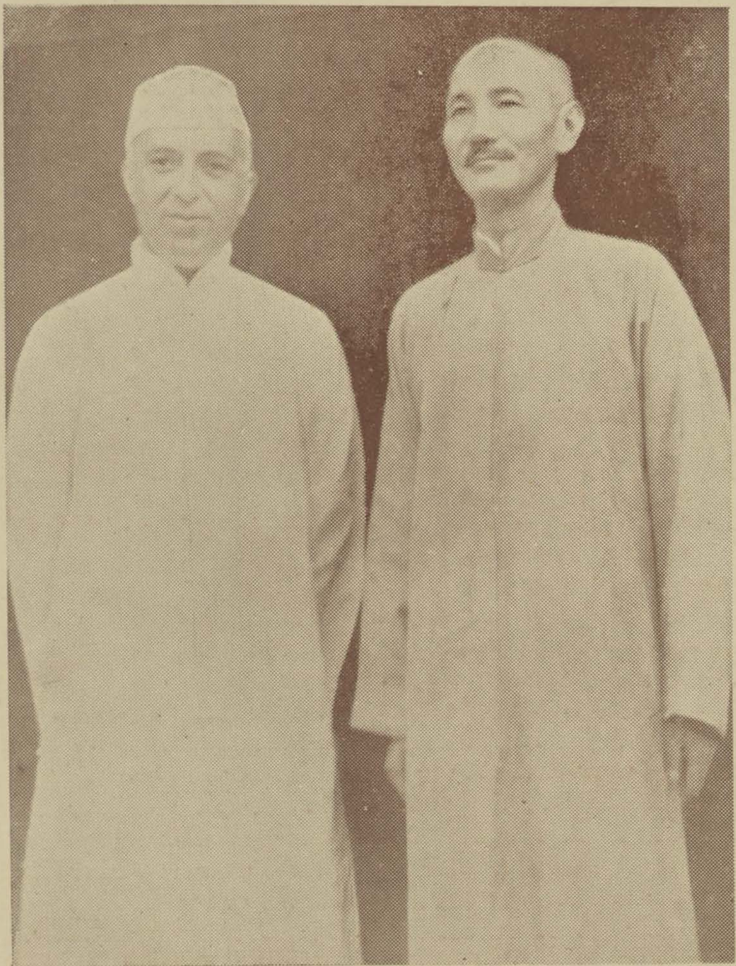
Tilak was arrested on 27th July, 1897. He was released on bail. He was convicted and sentenced to 18 months' rigorous imprisonment. An appeal to the Privy Council was made but it was rejected. The Congress session expressed its full sympathy towards Tilak. Mr. Surender Nath Bannerji said : "I declare on my behalf and on behalf of the entire Indian Press that in our heart of hearts we believe Mr. Tilak to be innocent of the charge brought against him. My sympathy goes forth towards Mr. Tilak in his prison home. For him, his nation is in tears." Two brothers Natu Sirdars were deported under Bombay Regulation XXV of 1827. Press Committees were established in the Bombay Presidency to control the publications and newspapers. Bills were introduced to stiffen still more the already wide language of section 124-A and to insert a new section 153-A. The Government of Bombay was panic stricken, and the Government of India took advantage of the situation, to deprive people of their legitimate rights. The Chitpavan Brahmans of Deccan were political suspects. Mr. Tilak was believed to be a formidable antagonist.

An attempt to pass a special resolution about Tilak's release at the Amraoti Congress in 1897 failed. Sir Sankaran Nair and Sir Surender Nath Bannerji, paid eloquent tributes to the great scholar, and man, who was wasting away in the jail. This raised Tilak's fame to the pinnacle of its glory.

FOURTEENTH SESSION

This sessions was held at Madras in 1898 under the presidentship of Mr. A. M. Bose. He was second only to Surender Nath Bannerji as an earnest worker. He was the most graceful of orators. He was the brilliant Star of Bengal. He was one of the founders of Sadhana Brahma Samaj. He founded City College at Calcutta. A. M. Bose was equal to any of his contemporaries and he would have attained a position of eminence in any line of activity, but his patriotism was so great that he broke his genius into fragments, in order to serve the country, in every sphere of national life. His last public appearance was pathetic. Unable to move, he was carried in a chair to a great popular demonstration on the day the partition of Bengal was brought into operation, and there he delivered the most feeling of speeches.

Panditji with General Chiang-kai-Shek



The moulders and welders of the destinies of India and China

His presidential address was a remarkable oration, full of unanswerable arguments.

Extracts from the Presidential address of Mr. M. A. Bose.

" When our heart is full, fewest and simplest words are the best. I might go on with the story of reaction, it has been a plenteous crop in these two years. The very means which the Government have adopted to root out what they believe to be want of affection or disaffection in this country will tend not to attach but to alienate, not to cure, but to create those very evils they dread, to suppress it may be the expression of discontent but to drive it deep beneath the surface ? Is the Congress to be a mere three days' affair ? Is there to be no continuity, no plan and no method, in its every day work ? Time has come when if we are to reap the full fruits of our deliberations and to give living force to our resolutions we must have a standing organisation to carry on the work of the Congress from year's beginning to year's end, to carry on that work continuously, steadily, earnestly, sending agents and missionaries to different parts of the country, spreading information, awakening interest, issuing leaflets and pamphlets, educating the public mind, drawing attention to the many wants and grievances of the dumb masses, we must have men wholly devoted to this work. May God bless us all and this dear land of ours. Do we love our land ? The land that gave us birth, the land beloved of Gods. In ages gone by when the world was young and darkness lay over many of its people, the land where knowledge lighted her earliest torch, the arts of life and civilization found their home, and philosophers pondered deep over the problems of life, where Rishis sang those hymns to the Father in the shining sky, the earliest of the Aryan world which still live and throb in our hearts and the eyes of the seer saw visions of things not of this world, that land where after ages the sundered streams of Aryan life unite once again in the present day. That land deserves all our love. I Love her more, cling to her the closer, for her misfortunes of the past, for the shadows and clouds that have hung over her in the times that have gone. Let our cry be God and Motherland. Our mission is holy and noble, an enterprise of peace, of love, of loyal progress, and our duty to our beloved sovereign faithfully discharged, of individual growth and national regeneration.

"The trumpet call of duty resounding to us amid the stirring scenes, the moving enthusiasm, the thrilling sight of this great gathering. The call sounds clear but let our hearts gather the strength to respond to that call and to be true to her, our common

mother, the land of our birth, to be true and faithful to the light that is within us and to every noble impulse that stirs within us."

By 1898 the fate of Indians in South Africa had considerably gone bad. Three additional disabling acts had been passed and Gandhi had begun his famous agitation. Lord Elgin consented to Natal Law being passed and the then Secretary of State for India, Lord Hamilton characterised Indians as a nation of savages.

The Congress sent greetings to Lord Curzon on his being appointed as Viceroy.

A renewed effort was made to frame a constitution for the Congress. Press Committees were condemned as a disgrace to India.

FIFTEENTH SESSION

This session of the Congress was held in 1899 at Lucknow Mr. Romesh Chander Dutt presided. He came into public life in 1898 after retirement from the Indian Civil Service. He has written several books on India. He said in his address:

"While plague continued to devastate the land with increasing severity and became the parent of regrettable political developments a more severe famine than that of 1896-97 afflicted the country in 1899. Lord Curzon came as a Viceroy towards the close of 1898. He inflicted upon the country, for seven long years, one contentious messure after another to which the people took the strongest exception. The dominant note of his regime was that India was and must remain a possession of England, that England's Imperial grip on India should be tightened and that no political advance should be thought of. His educational policy was an expression of the British Government's dissatisfaction with the political results of the diffusion of English education among Indians. Lord Curzon sent an expedition to Tibet at the expense of Indian revenues. His crowning achievement was the partition of Bengal which rightly exasperated the people of Bengal in particular and of India in general. When Lord Curzon suddenly left the country, almost like a thief in the night, he left the country seething with discontent from end to end.

"While every self-governing colony was prosperous and happy, India alone, with its vast population was suffering from famine which had spread in 1897 over a vast area. Doubts are

being expressed if British rule in India is a blessing for the poor cultivators and labourers of India.

"Famine is not the only calamity. It was accompanied by a war outside our frontiers which has cost millions and many brave lives. There is plague the ravages of which are not yet over. In the midst of these calamities the Government has thought it necessary to adopt rigorous measures and to curtail the liberty of the Press.

"In 1857 there was a wish to overturn the British Raj but that desire is dead. India has practically indentified itself with British rule, seeks and perpetuates British rule, is loyal to the British rule.

"There are defeats which are more glorious than victories and the defeat which we have sustained will strengthen our hearts, freshen our hopes and nerve our hands for new endeavours.

"A great calamity now stares us in the face. It is the famine from which millions of our countrymen are suffering now. I suggest that it is desirable to take some immediate and effective measures to improve the condition of the agricultural population of India. The real cause of the wretchedness of the peasant is that the land assesment is so heavy that the cultivator is not able to save in good years, enough to meet the failure of harvests in bad years. All our village industries like spinning and weaving have been killed by a free competition with the steam and machinery of England.

"It is an immutable law of nature that you cannot permanently secure the welfare of people if you tie up the hands of the people themselves. It is possible to prevent distress and disasters and deaths from famines, to spread prosperity and contentment and to evoke the zealous and loyal support of a grateful nation only by conceding to the people—in so far as is safely possible—the blessings of self-Government.

"I have raised my voice to urge the adoption of the better and the wiser course of admitting the people to a real share in the control of their own concerns to save India from distress, discontentment and deaths from famines. This course alone can consolidate British rule in India."

A full blown constitution of the Congress was passed. It was laid down that the object of the Indian National Congress shall be to promote by constitutional means the interest and the well-being of the people of Indian Empire. Tilak wanted to move

a resolution condemning the administration of Lord Sandhurst. His opponents raised a storm against it. The President of the Congress threatened to resign if Tilak persisted in his course. In the interests of the Congress itself Tilak had to withdraw.

The Congress considered the famine question and urged the Government to stop the drain of wealth and to curtail public expenditure to reduce taxes and to develop Public Industries.

SIXTEENTH SESSION

This session was held in 1900 at Lahore under the presidentship of Mr. N. G. Chandaverkar.

A very interesting thing is that he received a telegram at Lahore, while he was presiding at the session of the Congress, that he had been appointed as a judge of the High Court of Bombay. This is how the Congress leaders were won over by the Government. He was not the solitary instance. Many a distinguished son of the soil was snatched away by the Government by giving high offices. This policy of the Government was extremely harmful for the country because it prevented public men from speaking out their minds and hence the declaration of faith in British justice and other such shibboleths continued for a long time in the history of the Congress.

The Congress passed usual resolutions and deplored the exclusion of Indians from higher branches of public services. The session was a very tame affair and did not evoke any enthusiasm and zeal in the people. It was not very well attended and it lacked that life which one expects in a Congress session. It may he due to the dull state of affairs prevailing in the province or it may have been a reaction to the ruthless repressive policy persistently being pursued in the regime of Lord Curzon by provincial satraps who were extremely autocratic in their dealings.

Extracts from the Presidential address :

" I draw hope and inspiration from those I see before me. There is some thing elevating in the remembrance ot the fact that you on whose deliberations I have to preside, are all earnest men animated by a pure love for their country.

" The Congress movement has gathered much strength and force. It has outlived the age of satire and opposition. It has entered in the era of achievement. It has arrived at a period when more than ever it can justify its existence as the political conscience of the country.

"The position taken up by the Congress from the beginning about the increasing poverty of the vast numbers of the population of India is being practically recognised by those who hold the destinies of this country in their hands.

"The fact is that regarding famine the Government has been adopting a policy of drift. It has left an evil to grow till it became acute and then it has tried to grapple with it on the surface and that too by fits and starts.

"The question now is 'Is the policy of the future to be one of drift or of wise, well-regulated direction? Why do famines occur in increasing severity and why is the staying power of the people going down?'

"A peasant in India has to maintain himself on Rs. 17/- per annum.

The first famine commission declared that the multiplication of Industries was the only complete remedy for famine. That was 20 years ago. But since that report was made very little has been done to advance the suggestion into the region of practice. On the contrary certain things have been done which have reduced our Industries.

"Governments any more than individuals cannot both eat the cake and have it. The cost of Civil Government is very high and is on the increase.

"We should devote ourselves to country's cause with unflagging zeal. We as members of the Congress have taken upon ourselves a sacred duty and be it ours to go in the discharge of it with faith in our mission, hope for the future and loyal trust in the sense of justice and righteousness of the Government of Her Majesty the Queen Empress. The Congress should act as a mediator between the Government and the people. He said, there is a general tendency for the cost of the administration of the country to increase and it is a danger to be guarded against. If the country prospered in a corresponding measure it will not much matter, but while the prosperity of the nation has been practically at a stand still the expenditure has grown higher and higher by leaps and bounds."

The Indian Congress Committee of 45 was enlarged by the addition to it of certain office members with the President and President-elect, the ex-Presidents and so on. An enquiry was demanded with a view to discover and adopt remedies for the often recurring famines.

SEVENTEENTH SESSION

This session was held at Calcutta in 1901 under the presidentship of Mr. Wacha. He was one of the trinity of Parsi political leaders. He never spared himself in the service of his country. He was secretary of the Congress for years and years. He was one of the most constant and relentless critics of policy and measures of the Government, and his speeches and writings contain a mine of information. He was one of those who considered it a religious duty not to miss a solitary session of the Congress. He has made a vast contribution to the political and economic development of India during the many years of his active life.

In his address he said: "The Bombay Government had misconceived its true functions as regards famine relief operations both in 1897 and 1899, the result in my opinion of a too illiberal and narrow view of the situation. The famine policy of the Bombay Government was a failure. The public were in the right and those responsible for the famine operations grievously in the wrong."

He quoted John Bright that in India it would seem that there are three kinds of responsibility, divided responsibility, concealed responsibility, and no responsibility whatsoever. How is it that in England, at least for half a century past, there is no such calamity as famine though the country depends for two-thirds of its food supply on foreign countries. Is it not the case that it is the vast and most satisfactory improvement in the economic condition of the English labour and artisans which has banished the sufferings. All are agreed that India compared with the countries of Europe is very poor. It is certainly not pleasant for any foreign Government to be told that its people are steeped in an abject poverty, and that poverty, according to all symptoms, is growing. While the country is poor, it is being ruled at a cost unheard of in any part of the civilised world. It is clear that poor as India is, it is being made poorer by the economic anamolies which our Western rulers have unfortunately introduced into the country. England is doing the greatest injustice in this important matter to India for which we shall have one day to pay most dearly. The military expenditure is on the increase. India is made to maintain a large army for British Imperial interests. Indians have no voice in the expenditure and taxation of the country. The Englishmen view all Indian matters from their selfish point of view."

In 1901 work in London was organised. Newspaper *India* was placed on a firm basis, by quotas of subscribers being allocated to provinces. Delegation fee was raised from Rs. 10 to Rs. 20 to finance this paper. A committee consisting of Tilak, Malaviya and

seven others was constituted to go into the economic condition of India. Admission of Indians to the Police Competitive Examinations in England and their larger employment in the higher ranks of Army was demanded.

EIGHTEENTH SESSION

This was held at Ahmedabad in 1902. Mr. Surrender Nath Bannerji presided. He said: " We have an undying faith, as strong as ever inspired a prophet or a priest, that the cause to which we are pledged will triumph over all difficulties, outlive all prejudices, leading us onward and upward, inspiring at each stage a loftier devotion and developing a truer manhood. I believe the Congress is a Divine Mission. Is there a nobler dharma, nobler religion, a more divine mandate, than that which enjoins that our most sacred duty which has a paramountcy over all others, is the duty which we owe to the land of our birth." He suggested that matters of Indian politics should be made party questions. His ideal was to work with unwavering loyalty to the British connection for the object was not the supersession of British rule in India but the broadening of its basis, the liberation of the spirit, the ennobling of its character, and placing it on the unchangeable foundations of a nation's affection.

"We plead for the permanence of British rule in India. We plead for justice and liberty, for equal rights and enlarged privileges, for our participation in the citizenship of Empire, and I am sure, we do not plead in vain, for the Empire thus reconstituted and re-organised will be stronger, nobler, richer, far in the love, the gratitude, the enthusiastic devotion of a happy and contented people rejoicing in their indissoluble union with England and glorying in the rich promises of steady and uninterrupted progress towards their high destinies, under the protection and guidance of that great people to whom in the counsels of Providence has been assigned the high mission and the consecrated task of disseminating among the nations of the earth, the priceless, the inestimable blessing of constitutional liberty.

" We are already sufficiently loyal, sufficiently attached to a British connection. But we are anxious for the permanence of British rule, for our permanent incorporation into the great confederacy of the British Empire. We have no higher aspiration than that. The responsibilities of the present, the hopes of the future, the glories of the past ought all to inspire us with the noblest enthusiasm to save our country. Is there a land more worthy of service and sacrifice? Is there a land more interesting, more

venerated in antiquity, more rich in historic traditions, in the wealth of religious, ethical and spiritual conceptions which have left an enduring impression on the civilization of mankind? India is the cradle of religions. Chaitanya, Nanak, Tuka Ram and Ram Das lift the mind high up to the sublimer eminence of the Divine ideal. India is the holy land of the East. Here in the morning of the world, Vedic Rishis sang these hymns which represent the first yearnings of humanity towards the human ideal. Our pupils have outdistanced us. Japan by her wonderful self-sacrifice, her patience, her fortitude, her indomitable energy has achieved marvellous success in her ambitions."

Resolutions were passed regarding the increase of £7,86,000 per annum in the capitation charges borne by India on account of the British forces in India, regarding the recommendation of the Indian Universities Commission being retrograde, reactionary and inimical to the best interests of the country.

NINETEENTH SESSION

This was held in Madras in 1903. Mr. Lal Mohan Ghose presided. He appeared on the Congress platform first in 1890 and moved the resolution relating to Mr. Bradlaugh's bill on the Government of India. A deputation on behalf of Indian Association was sent to England to protest against the Vernacular Act and the reduction of age limit for the Indian Civil Service examinations. Mr. Lal Mohan Ghose was a member of the deputation though he was only 30. When he made a powerful speech in the first public meeting that he addressed in London, John Bright who was the greatest orator of England said: " I will not spoil the effect of the magnificent oration we have heard by any feeble words of mine." The result of this deputation was that there was a debate in the House of Commons in which Gladstone took part and said that the Vernacular Press Act was a disgrace to the Government. When he became Prime Minister, this Act was repealed. Mr. Lal Mohan Ghose made such an impression on British audiences by his eloquence that the 'bronzed orator' as he was called, drew vast audiences wherever he was announced to appear on the platform. He was twice selected as a liberal candidate for the Parliament but he did not succeed. He was known as a Political Yogi.

In this brilliant address he described the Coronation Darbar as a "Pompous pageantry to a perishing people." He easily occupies the first place among the orators of India and even of the world of his time. He said:

"I am by constitution and temperament a student and a recluse. But our destinies are shaped by a higher power than our own inclinations or our own national aptitudes. Thus it has happened that by an irony of fate that the best years of my life have been spent in the storm and strife of politics. I appear before you on the platform of this great national gathering to discuss with each other some of the most important political questions affecting the well-being of our common country. Unfortunately Providence is only too often appealed to by the governing classes and sovereigns and rulers from the time of Alexander to Kaiser, find it easy to believe that every act of theirs is the direct result of divine inspiration. May we not ask whether we are to believe that the policy which many years ago killed our indigenous industries, which even only the other day unblushingly imposed excise duty on cotton manufactures, which steadily drains our national resource to the extent of 20 crores of rupees per annum, and which bv imposing heavy burdens on our agricultural population increase the frequency and intensity of our famines to an extent unknown in former times, are we to believe that the various administrative acts which have led to these results were directly inspired by the beneficent Providence.

"It is a hopeful sign of the times that there is an increasing rapprochement between the Hindus and the Mohammedans. Our Mohammedan fellow countrymen who may have at one time looked askance at the Congress on account of the misrepresentations of those who are interested in dividing us, are now daily becoming more and more convinced that their interests as well as ours can only be advanced if we heartily co-operate with each other.

Had I a hundred mouths a hundred tongues,
A voice of brass and adamantine lungs.

I could even then hardly hope to make a sufficiently impassioned appeal to you as regards the vital importance of educating the masses.

Let us remember that we can never hope to realise our aspirations unless the Congress is fully sensible towards the masses of our people, and shape its policy as to bring them in line with us.

I have always been strong in my belief that our industries form the best of all political levers. Once we rear up large industries in India (you must distinguish it from exploitation of

foreign capital) in which the interest not only of the capitalist but that of wage-earner, and consumer, is to be safeguarded. You may be sure that three-fourths of our battle of reform is won, for the power of the purse is by far the greatest of all powers.

"Young men of India, in you the hopes of our country are centered, and I cannot bring home to you the responsibilities which rest on you better than this: Gentlemen ! the fate of India is in your hands.

"We are not a self-governing nation, we are not able like the English people, to change one administration for another by our votes on the polling booths. We have to depend entirely upon the justice of the British Parliament, for unfortunately it is only too true that as time advances our Indian bureaucracy, instead of coming into line with popular ideas seems to grow more and more unsympathetic.

A year has rolled by since the great political pageant was held at Delhi against the unanimous protests of all our public both in the press and on the platform. No other country would have ventured to waste vast sums of money on an empty pageant (Delhi Durbar) when famine and pestilence were stalking over the land and the Angel of Death was flapping his wings almost within hearing of the light-hearted revelers. This great tamasha was celebrated with utter recklessness of expense which you may always expect when any men no matter how highly placed, were dealing with other people's money and were practically accountable to none for their acts. Even if half the vast sum spent in connection with the Delhi Durbar had been made over for the purpose of famine relief, it might have been the means of saving millions of men, women and children from death by starvation."

Usual resolutions were passed. The Congress sought judicial and legislative restrictions on over-assessment. Resolutions were passed against the proposed Indian Universities Bill and Official Secrets Bill.

TWENTIETH SESSION

This session was held in 1904, in Bombay. It was presided over by Sir Henry Cotton. He belonged to the I.C.S., and was Chief Commissioner of Assam, and on his retirement from service joined the Congress. He was cheated of the position of Lieut.-Governor of Bengal due to Lord Curzon's dissatisfaction with him for his advocacy of the cause of the coolies against the planters in Assam. He had to pay a heavy penalty for this courage of his

convictions. He did very useful work for India in London as a moving spirit of the British Committee.

In his presidential address he enunciated the ideal of the Indian patriot as the establishment of a federation of free and separate states, the united states of India on a fraternal footing with the self-governing colonies, each with its own local autonomy, cemented together under the aegis of great Britain.

"The foundations of the future have been laid and a superstructure is raised upon them. We have good grounds for hope. Skill, care and forethought are needed. The growth of an Indian Nation is the great political revolution that is working before our eyes. Relax not your efforts, for the waves of progress are irrisistably dashing against the backwater of prejudices.

"I have good reasons to be proud of the position in which you have placed me. I don't belong to your race, or country, and therefore, this honour is even greater than when you confer it on one of your countrymen. It is the highest compliment you could pay me, and I accepted it not only with a deep sense of responsibility, but also of gratitude, and pride in this notable and public recognition of the humble services I have been able to render to India.

"The Indian National Congress has thus its own functions, which, I take upon myself to say, as a watchful eye-witness from its very birth, it has discharged with exemplary fidelity, judgment and moderation.

"Patience and perseverance, persistance, in good repute, and evil repute, earnestness and resolution, these are the attributes of the leaders of a National Movement. I make bold to say that they are the qualities which your leaders possess. You may well be proud of them. They are all household words not only in this Congress camp but in hall and hamlet, in the palace and in the cottage. They have earned a niche in the Temple of Fame and their memory will be cherished by a grateful posterity.

"You are working together in the formation of a National Movement, with common sentiments of interest and patriotism. The different races, the numberless castes, classes and creeds of India are welded together in your ranks.

"Indian patriots look back on their past, with a just sense of pride, and they know that India will again take her own rank among the nations of the East. They are striving for the attainment of this ideal which however, it may be marred or delayed in execution, is sure in the end

"Strive to show yourselves constantly worthy of your cause. Be tolerant towards all. Remember that moral improvement is the only source of real unity and as such of dignity as well as happiness."

TWENTY-FIRST SESSION

It was held in Benares in 1905 under the presidentship of Mr. G. K. Gokhale. Mahatma Gandhi thus describes his first meeting with Gokhale: "I met Gokhale. I found him on the Ferguson College grounds. He gave me an affectionate welcome and his manner immediately won my heart. Sir Pherozeshah had seemed to me like the Himalaya, the Lokmanya like the ocean, but Gokhale was as the Ganges. One could have a refreshing bath in the holy river. It was a joy to be on the Ganges with a boat and an oar. Gokhale closely examined me as a schoolmaster would examine a candidate, seeking admission to a school. In the sphere of politics the place that Gokhale occupied in my heart during his lifetime and occupies even now is absolutely unique."

In the direct line of succession to Dadabhoy, Ranade and Sir Pherozeshah Mehta comes Mr. Gokhale. Ranade was his guru for 12 years. Mr. Gokhale who possessed qualities which would have won him the richest prizes in life, while still in his teens, voluntarily entered upon a life of privation, and sacrifice. He was an idealist all his life, but a practical idealist. In his own words, he set no limits to aspirations of his countrymen, yet he had a constant, and purposeful regard, for the unceasing adjustments to changes of circumstance, thought, and opinion, which are the essence of statesmanship. He could distinguish between impossible and realisable aims. It was Lord Morley's opinion that Mr. Gokhale unlike many others "had a politician's head and a sense of executive responsibility". In him there was complete harmony between thought, word and act, and he was one of the very few men who never deviated from what he considered to be right. He emphatically condemned the immoral doctrine that the end justified the means. He was scrupulously conscientious in every transaction of life, clear and powerful in intellect, hardworking to a fault, unsparing in exertion. Mr. Gokhale amassed knowledge at once, vast, various, and exact. He was a master of direct expression and lucid exposition.

It is difficult to say whether his ability or his patriotism was greater. There was no statesman in England comparable to Gokhale. He was easily greater than Mr. Asquith himself.

In 1905 he established the Servants of India Society with an idea, and ideal than which, nothing could be loftier. That ideal is 'devotion to motherland' so profound and so passionate that its very thought thrills and its actual touch lifts one out of oneself. He must at all times and in all conditions think of the country and labour for the country. He gave the motto: "The patriot is the hero." He was an ideal patriot and an incomparable hero.

Gokhale's policy was moderate and constitutional, and to his mind it was a loftier mission, to educate the people morally and guide them to intellectual maturity. His incorruptible honesty won him the confidence of all classes. He was a champion of compulsory education.

He gave his life for India through arduous overwork.

He carried on an almost single-handed combat with so great a Parliamentarian as Curzon, who had the greatest respect for Gokhale. He once wrote to him: 'God has endowed you with extraordinary abilities, and you have placed them unreservedly at the disposal of your country."

Lokmanya Tilak paid a glowing tribute to him:

"This diamond of India, the jewel of Maharashtra, the prince of workers, is taking eternal rest. Look at him and try to emulate him. He had made his name immortal. The loss is irreparable."

Gokhale had always a soft corner in his heart for the starving, shrunken, shrivelled up, ryot, toiling from dawn to dark to earn his scanty meal, patient, resigned, forbearing beyond measure, entirely voiceless in the Parliament of his rulers, and meekly prepared to bear whatever burdens God and man might be pleased to impose upon him.

Sir William Wedderburn writes about him:

"A message lies before me which may truly be said to write sorrow on the bosom of the earth—a telegram from Bombay saying 'Universal mourning in India, Gokhale's untimely death, loss of such a true son, and patriot irreparable.'

"The telegram truly says that the loss is irreparable, both on account of his intrinsic qualities, and on account of the extraordinary influence for good, that he was able to exercise both in India and England. He was endeared to all who knew him for saintly character, he was revered for the power of his intellect, standing before the world as the finest type of an Indian sage.

"He was a link of true metal uniting the East and the West."

Lord Morley accorded to him prolonged interviews at which he set forth fully the needs and aspirations of the Indian people. He rendered valuable services by his mission to South Africa. He took an active part in the development of Indian National Congress identifying himself to the party who held firmly to constitutional methods, and had full trust in the ultimate justice of British people.

Extracts from his presidential address:

"Proud indeed is the moment in an Indian's life when he receives, at your hands, this most conspicuous mark of your confidence and your favour.

"The political sky has been overcast and for some time a storm has been raging and it is with rocks ahead and angry waves beating around that I am called upon to take charge of the vessel of the Congress.

"It is a sad truth that to the end of his administration, Lord Curzon did not really understand the people of India. Lord Curzon denounced in unmeasured terms not only the present generation of Indians, but also their remote ancestors, and even the ideals of their race, which they cherish above everything. To him India was a country where the Englishman was to monopolise for all time, all power, and talk all the while of duty. India's only business was to be governed, and it was a sacrilage on his part to have any other aspiration. He inflicted a grievous wrong on Bengalees by his scheme of partition of Bengal. He showed utter contempt for public opinion, and reckless disregard of the most cherished feelings of the people.

"The true Swadeshi Movement is both a patriotic, and an economic movement. The idea of Swadesh or of one's own country is one of the noblest conceptions that have ever stirred the heart of humanity.

"When the Congress was first started we were under the influence of that remarkakle outburst of enthusiasm for British rule, which had been evoked in the country by Lord Ripon. Twenty years have since elapsed and during that time much has happened to chill that hope and dim that faith. The goal of the Congress is that India should be governed in the interest of of Indians themselves.

"Regarding our claims and expectations based on the pledges of the soveriegn and the Parliament Lord Lytton wrote: 'We

all know that these claims and expectations never can or will be fulfilled. We had to choose between prohibiting them (the natives of India) and cheating them and we have chosen the least straightforward course. Since I am writing confidentially I I do not hesitate to see that both the Government of England and of India appear to me up to the present moment unable to answer satisfactorily the charge of having taken every means in their power of breaking to the heart, the words of promise, they had uttered to the ear.'

"I have no wish to underrate the difficulties that lie in our path, but I am convinced more than ever that they are not insuperable. Moreover, the real moral interest of a struggle such as we are engaged in, lies not so much in the particular readjustments of present institutions which we may succeed in securing, as in the strength that the conflict brings us, to be a permanent part of ourselves.

"The true end of our work" said Mr. Ranade, nine years ago, " is to renovate, to purify, and also to perfect the whole man by liberating his intellect, elevating his standard of duty, and developing to the full all its powers.

I will call to your minds the words of another great teacher of Humanity who asks us to keep our faith in spite of trying circumstances and warns us against the presumption of despairing because we do not see the whole clearly before our eyes.

Our times are in hand.
Who saith
'A whole I planned, youth shows but half.
Trust God, see all not be afraid."

Resolutions:

The first echoes of division of opinion in Congress ranks was heard in this session. The Nationalists opposed in the Subjects Committee a resolution of welcome to the Prince and Princess of Wales who were then on a visit to India. The Nationalists walked out of the house when it was put to vote.

Lord Minto believed that Mr. Gokhale was a leading promoter of the idea of boycott of the Royal visitors. On the other hand he had discouraged, resisted and defeated the opposition. All Gokhale said was 'Lord Curzon owed it to the Royal visitors not to plunge the largest province of India into violent agitation, and grief, on the eve of their visit to it.'

The principal topic of contention at the Congress was the question of boycott. In the end a compromise was reached and members of both parties could support it with equal strength.

THE PARTITION OF BENGAL

By Lord Curzon's ukase of December 1903 the area inhabited by Bengalees hitherto known as Bengal proper was brought under two different Governments. One of the two new provinces retained the name of Bengal, the other was called Eastern Bengal and Assam, and had its capital at Dacca. For nearly two years after this announcement there was a great deal of agitation against it. Over 2,000 public meetings broadcast their protest, hundreds of memorials were submitted to the Government, particularly one sent to the Secretary of State over the signatures of 70,000 people from Eastern Bengal. In July, 1905 there was a notification which announced that the partition was to take effect from October, 1905.

Bengal did not groan in agony. It roared. And from all over India came offers of help to the stricken people. "My Lord! conciliate Bengal." Gokhale pleaded before the Viceroy in the Legislative Council and when he went to England in 1905 as representative of the Congress, he sought to convince British public men of the wrong that was being done to Bengal. Speeches and petitions, however, were neither effective, nor in consonance with the temper of Bengal. Leaders of the province took counsel together and resolved to boycott foreign goods as a protest against the partition and on August 7, 1905, was held a memorable meeting which inaugurated what is called the Swadeshi Movement. Bengal's pent up patriotism was pouring itself out in the form of a stream of stirring songs that have never been matched.

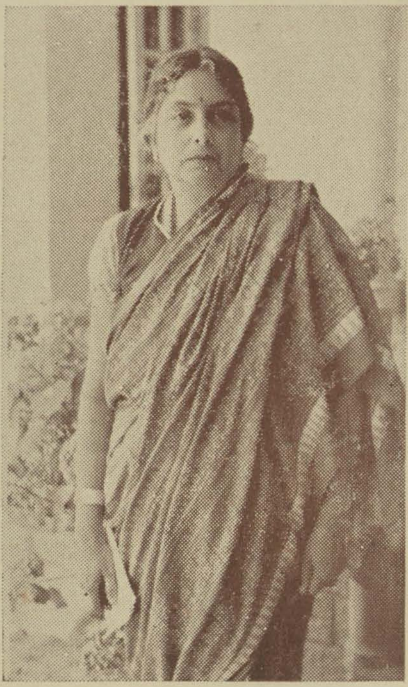
October 16, 1905, the day when the partition was to become effective, saw in Bengal popular demonstrations unparalleled in Indian history. It was a day of mourning and in Calcutta and other places a large part of the population fasted and went about barefooted. Shops were shut. A ceremony called Rakhibandhan was observed, that is yellow threads were bound round the wrists of the demonstrators as a symbol of brotherhood, and a vow was taken that Bengalees would do everything in their power to maintain their integrity. Bankim Chandra's Bande Mataram became a kind of National Anthem, a lyric of passionate patriotism.

On November 1, 1905, a great meeting was held in Calcutta when Surendra Nath Bannerji on behalf of the province read a famous manifesto. "Whereas the Government has thought fit to



Sarojini Naidu

India's
Woman-
hood
Reborn



Kamla Devi Chattopadhya



Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit

They
March
to
Freedom
with
men



Col. Lakshmi Swaminathan

effectuate the partition of Bengal in spite of the universal protest of the Bengalee nation, we hereby pledge, and proclaim, that as a people, we shall do everything in our power to counteract the evil effects of the dismemberment of our province and to maintain the integrity of our race. So help us God."

Mr. Morley, Secretary of State for India admitted that partition had gone wholly, and decisively, against the wishes of the majority of the people concerned, but dismissed the question as being a settled fact. To get it reversed was the determination of Bengal. It was evident that so long as the partition was not annulled, the Bengalee community would know no rest and would have no peace.

The Bengalee, be he a Hindu or a Mohammedan, felt the strongest repugnance to the breaking up of his home. He relented with a zeal which was religious in its intensity. He took it as an outrage upon the deepest domestic association. The public opinion of a great province expressed with unanimity and unequalled emphasis, was flouted, and treated with open and undisguised contempt in a matter affecting the vital well-being of the province.

Mr. Surender Nath Bannerji made a forceful speech on this resolution in the Congress Session of 1906. He said :

" We decline to accept it as a settled fact. We decline to accept a wrong—admitted to be wrong, an outrageous and deliberate insult upon the opinion of our people, as upon the verities of our life, and our administration. A wrong is a lie, and as such, it is opposed to the mandate of the Omnipotent, and is in conflict with the moral order of the universe. It can't endure in this world of eternal verities. A wrong has been committed, and the Government itself has admitted it as such, and it is felt by the people as such. The partition of Bengal strikes at the root of our contentment. It has caused widespread dissatisfaction, it has alienated the people from the rulers. There could be no practical co-operation between them where there is this yawning gulf. In the matter of partition we have begged and prayed and protested, entreated, the arts of sycophancy have been put into fullest requisition. But all in vain. Mohammedans have no reason to be satisfied with the partition. As a matter of fact they do not support it. I know not what the fate of this agitation will be. At the present moment the signs are all against us. The future is enveloped in the deepest darkness, and not the faintest streak of hope illumines the darkness of the situation.

"I appeal to you to stand by us in this, the greatest struggle in which we are engaged, since British rule, and to such an appeal made by afflicted Bengal to United India, there can be but one reply, and it will be a reply which will voice forth the predominating sentiment of the great gathering, *viz.*, that we are all brothers moved by mutual grievances, cemented by mutual hopes, animated by mutual aspirations, and linked together by a common destiny, and that as brothers we are resolved to fight for each other's rights and stand by one another in the hour of our darkest misfortnne."

Mr. Gokhale made the following observations :

"I have carefully gone through all the papers which have been published by the Government on this subject of partition. Three things have struck me forcibly—determination to dismember Bengal at all costs—an anxiety to further the interests of Assam, at the expense of Bengal, and a desire to suit everything to the interests and convenience of Indian Civil Service. Lord Curzon was determined to partition Bengal before he left India, and so he rushed the necessary legislation.

"Mr. Fuller, Lieut.-Governor, Eastern Bengal, has cast to winds all prudence, all restraints, and all sense of responsibility. There is no saner method of goading a docile people into a state of dangerous despair than the kind of hectoring and repression he has been attempting. The difficulties which confront the leaders of Bengal are enormous, but I know there is no disposition to shirk from responsibility, and I have no doubt that whatever sacrifices are necessary, will be cheerfully made. All India is at their back and they will receive, in the work that lies before them, the cordial sympathy and assistance of other provinces."

The tremendous upheaval of popular feeling which resulted in Bengal in consequence of partition constitutes a landmark in the history of our national progress. For the first time since British rule began, all sections of the Indian community without distinction of caste and creed were moved by a common impulse, and without the stimulus of external pressure acted together in offering resistance to a common wrong. A wave of true national consciousness swept over the province. Bengal's heroic stand against the oppression of a harsh and uncontrolled bureaucracy astonished and gratified all India and her sufferings were not endured in vain because they helped to infuse a new life in the people.

In Calcutta the vow of Swadeshi was administered at mass meetings in the temple of Kali. School boys and students marched in the van of national demonstrations for Swaraj or by furnishing picketing parties for Swadeshi and boycott. Youths banded to

collect patriotic funds. The whole of India was then organized and responded to the appeal of Bengal. Undoubtedly this blunder of Lord Curzon was a blessing in disguise for Bengal and the rest of India. It generated feelings of self-respect, self-reliance, self-determination, self-sacrifice, self-abnegation and self-assertiveness. The bubble of British benevolence was pricked. The National Movement spread into remote places where Swadesh and Swaraj had not been heard. It led to the formation of a nationalist party in the country and though it could not achieve bright results at the start, it sowed the seeds of self-Government and it is due to Lord Curzon and the nationalist leaders of India that this national calamity brought in its wake a mass awakening the like of which India had not witnessed for the past half a century.

TWENTY-SECOND SESSION

This session was held in Calcutta in 1906. Mr. Dadabhoy Naoroji presided. This was the third time he was presiding at the session of the Congress. He had come all the way from England at the mature age of 81 in order to effect a conciliation between the moderates and the nationalists.

His presidential speech in 1906 formed a remarkable departure from the conventional type of Congress addresses. His address was brief, pointed and spirited. He wished the Congress to get to work in framing practical resolutions. He introduced an altogether new tone which was free from the conventional phrases of former speeches. ' We do not ask for favours, we want only justice. We want Self-Government or Swaraj like that of the United Kingdom or Dominions.' To him belongs the credit of using from the Congress platform this comprehensive word, which could be easily understood throughout the length and breadth of India by the simplest villager, as by the educated classes. It gave a clear objective to the people of India. Though to Lokmanya Tilak is honour, and glory, due for giving this word to his country, so sweet, so expressive and so significant, but Dadabhoy made it the official slogan of the Congress and the country. This word gained in prestige and popularity, power and strength all its own. This sacred *mantra* produced its effect on the future course of events in India.

Dadabhoy's attitude was mainly responsible for the bolder tone of the resolutions of the Congress of the year. His speech from the chair gave the lead. In his address he said: "Freedom is the very breath of our life. We stand for liberty. The whole of the administration in every department must be in the hands of the people. If this had been in Indian hands, there should have been no

present poverty, wretchedness and dissatisfaction of the Indian people."

"I must say that I have felt so many disappointments as would be sufficient to break my heart, and lead me to despair, and even I am afraid, to rebel. My disappointments have not been of the ordinary kind but far worse and keener.

"Well-to-do Indians should raise a large fund of patriotism. With this fund we should organise a body of able men, and good speakers, to go to all the nooks, and corners of India, to inform the people of their rights and how to exercise and enjoy those."

Referring to Bengal partition he said: "It is a just and great grievance. It is a bad blunder of England. I don't despair. I hope it may yet be rectified. Agitation is the civilised, peaceful weapon of moral force. Agitation means inform. Inform the Indian people what their rights are and why and how they should obtain them. The Government is unconstitutional and despotic and there should be a persistent and forceful agitation against it.

"Swadeshi is not a thing of to-day. It is a forced necessity for India in its unnatural economic muddle. There should be a thorough political union among the Indian people of all creeds and classes. I make a particular appeal to my friends the Mohammedans. They are a manly people and they must bring themselves in line with people of other communities to win Swaraj because when once it is attained there will be prosperity enough for all. The thorough union of all the people for their emancipation is an absolute necessity. We all are in one boat. We must sink or swim together. United we stand divided we fall.

"Let every one of us do the best he can, do all in harmony for the common object of self-Government. I leave these words of affection and devotion for my countrymen, I say, "Be united, persevere and achieve self-Government so that millions now perishing by poverty, famine and plague, and the scores of millions that are starving now on scanty subsistence may be saved and India may once more occupy her proud position of yore amongst the greatest and civilised nations of the world."

RESOLUTIONS

1. Resolved that the Congress is of opinion that the system of Government obtaining in the self-governing British colonies should be extended to India.

2. Resolved that the Congress accords its most cordial

support to the Swadeshi movement, and calls upon the people of the country to labour for its success by making earnest and sustained efforts to promote the growth of indigenous industries, and to stimulate the production of indigenous articles by giving them preference over imported commodities even at some sacrifice.

3. Resolved that in the opinion of the Congress the time has arrived for the people all over the country to take up earnestly the question of national education for both, boys and girls and organize a system of education, literary, scientific and technical to suit the requirements of the country on national lines and under national control.

The main resolutions related to Partition of Bengal, Boycott, and Swadeshi. For the first time in the history of the Congress Boycott was authorised to be used as a political weapon. Babu Bepin Chandra Pal attached a political meaning to the following resolution passed in that session :

'That having regard to the fact that the people of the country have little or no voice in its administration and that their representations do not receive due consideration from the Government the Congress is of opinion that the Boycott movement inaugurated in Bengal by way of protest against the partition of that province was and is legitimate.'

Moderate leaders dissented from Bepin Chandra Pal's interpretation. The triumph of Tilak's party was complete at the Calcutta Congress of 1906.

TWENTY-THIRD SESSION

This was to be held at Nagpur. At Nagpur the Reception Committee wished to have Tilak as the President of the Session, and as this was not acceptable to the moderates the venue was changed to Surat. The moderates had decided to have Dr. Rash Behari Ghosh as President of this session. The moderates had a majority in the Reception Committee and therefore his election was certain. About a week or so before the session a list of the subjects to be discussed was published. It did not include resolutions on Swaraj, Swadeshi, Boycott and National Education. The Nationalists decided to fight against this tendency to recede from the policy laid down by the Calcutta Congress. The Nationalists wished to have Lala Lajpat Rai in the Chair. Though he was of the same view as Tilak and other nationalists but he did not like to preside under the circumstances.

In the meantime Tilak met Surender Nath and clearly

stated that they would withdraw all opposition if the Nationalist party was assured that the *status quo* will not be disturbed. He said that he would not be a party to any such deviation. Tilak asked for a copy of the draft resolutions. He got it much after these had been issued to the Press.

The attitude of the moderates was exasperating, and Tilak had to offer the opposition from the very start.

After the Chairman of the Reception Committee had read his address Mr. Surender Nath Banerji rose to propose the name of Dr. Ghose as President of the Session. He was shouted down and even his trumpet voice was silenced. There was a great commotion in the Pandal. The session was adjourned. Tilak proposed that the election of the President should be put off for a while and a committee consisting of one moderate and one nationalist from every province should be formed and differences settled. This did not materialize. Tilak asked permission from the Chairman of the Reception Committee to move an adjournment after President's name has been proposed and seconded, with a constructive proposal. The Chairman did not send a reply. Tilak sent a reminder. Tilak therefore proceeded to the platform. A volunteer held him back. Anyhow he was on the platform. Dr. Ghose had occupied the presidential chair. Shouts began. Tilak insisted on his right to address the delegates and told Dr. Ghose that he had not been properly elected. One of the Secretaries of the Reception Committee touched Tilak's person but was pushed aside. Great confusion prevailed. Dr. Ghose could not read his address. Mr. Motilal Ghosh, Lala Harkishen Lal and others, made a supreme effort to bring about a compromise. Tilak made the following statement :

" I and my party are prepared to waive our opposition to the election of Dr. Ghose as President of the 23rd Indian National Congress, and we are prepared to act in the spirit of forgive and forget provided, firstly, that last year resolutions on Swaraj, Swadeshi, Boycott and National Education are adhered to and each expressly reaffirmed ; and, secondly, such passages if any in Dr. Ghose's speech as may be offensive to the Nationalists Party are omitted.' This was not accepted by the moderates and so both the parties departed in the midst of bitterness and rancour. The Congress session had to break up amidst scenes of violence.

Mr. Gokhale warned the younger party, " You do not realize the enormous reserve of power behind the Government. If the Congress were to do anything such as you suggest the Government would have no difficulty in throttling it in five minutes."

Tilak expressed his political views as under :

" Certainly there is a very small party which talks about abolishing the British rule at once and completely. That does not concern us. It is much too far in the future. Unorganized, disarmed and still disunited, we should not have a chance of shaking the British suzerainty. We may leave all that sort of thing to a distant time."

Dr. Ghose's address contained the following passages :

" What we do demand is that our rulers should introduce reforms. We want in reality and not in mere name to be the sons of the Empire.

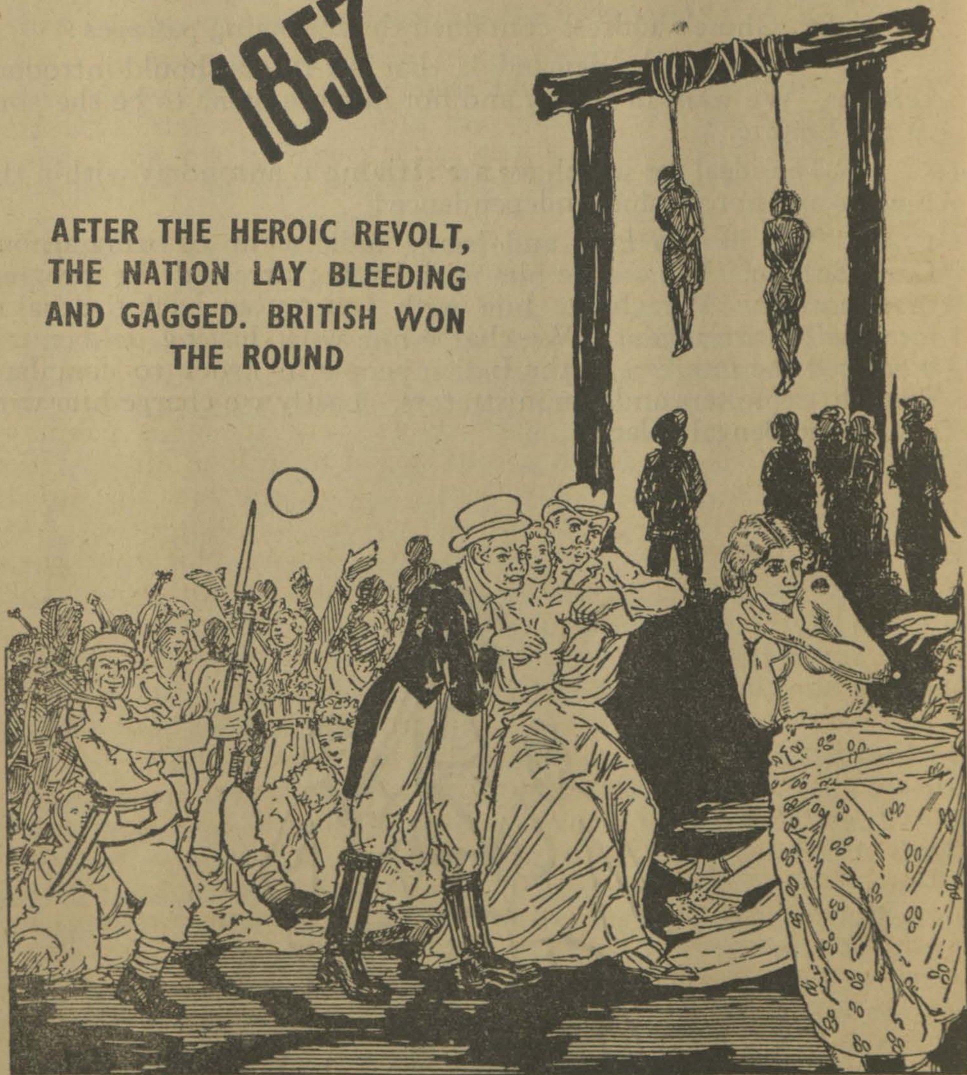
"The ideal for which we are striving is autonomy within the Empire and not absolute independence !

" We have a long and heavy indictment to bring against Lord Curzon. We charge him with having arrested the progress of education. We charge him with having set back the dial of local self-Government. We charge him with having deliberately sacrificed the interests of the Indian people in order to conciliate English exploiters and administrators. Lastly we charge him with having set Bengal ablaze."



THE LAST FLICKER 1857

AFTER THE HEROIC REVOLT, THE NATION LAY BLEEDING AND GAGGED. BRITISH WON THE ROUND



CHAPTER X

Repression

SINCE 1858, when the movement of National Revolution was crushed, the relations between the British and the Indians were very much embittered. The British wreaked their vengeance in an immeasurable and even unimaginable manner. Executions, shootings, hangings had become an every-day affair. Confiscation of property was the general rule. Those who had millions were rendered paupers. They who rolled in wealth were made to roll in dust. Thus there was no love lost between the rulers and the ruled. Despair, discontent and distress depressed India and they became sullen and sour. They were cowed down. Not that they accepted the British Raj willingly but they had no option.

The movement of liberation of India might once again have gained force and strength after some years but the diplomacy and statesmanship of the British created an English educated class to act as a buffer. Lord Dufferin encouraged Mr. Hume to organize this class and thus to divert their attention to the so-called constitutional agitation within the four corners of . law which, of course, is a euphemism for the sweet will of the governors. It began under foreign inspiration and it was to a great extent under foreign control. As long as their plan worked well the Government encouraged it. It patted the backs of our leaders of those days and promised them a microscopic share in the administration. The English-educated leaders met once a year, offered their loyal devotion to the throne and its representatives, prayed for the stability and continuance of British Raj, implored for jobs and dispersed. They met in a holiday mood, they enjoyed their speeches and dinners, and they stabilised the foundations of British Raj. Fear and cowardice, greed and avarice, were the ruling features of those days. Their faith in their rulers

and their promises was unenviable. And then there occurred a change. It was bound to come. The alien Government cannot stand even the mildest criticism even if couched in a very flottering and sycophant language. The Government smelt a danger and reversed its policy. Instead of patronising the Congress and its leaders it began to oppose it now mildly, now wildly. The Government had a double policy. On the one hand it picked up men from the Congress ranks either for jobs, or for titles, or for associaton with it in one or the other form and on the other, it began to place repressive measures on the Statute Book.

As early as 1870 Lord Lytton forced a Press Act on India which Mr. Gladstone described as a disgrace to the Government and which was repealed later on. Lord Lytton can easily claim the glory of being the first apostle of Swaraj. His famous letter in which he charges both the Governments of India and of England with cheating Indians with promises sweet to the ear and yet never intended to be carried out. He described the Proclamation as a mere eye-wash more to be honoured in its breach than in observance.

And then appeared Lord Curzon on the scene. He is one of the greatest builders of Indian nation. He wanted to stabilise the British Raj, the Imperialist regime. He offended one and all, but to him rightly belongs the glory of uniting India, of awakening India, of arousing the self-respect of India, of kindling the smouldering fire of nationalism, and patriotism on which sweet words and lucrative jobs promised by his predecessors had deposited heaps of ashes. His policy though intended to kill Indian nationalism, proved an elixir to revive the nation. Lokmanya Tilak entered the political arcna whose name and memory are cherished with love and reverence, adoration and admiration, respect and regard, gratitude and glory, honour and thankfulness. He was a Prince among heroes. He was bold and brave beyond measure. He was a born fighter. He proclaimed, "Swaraj is my birth right and I shall have it."

He enthused people. He gave them true lead and to him thus belongs the credit of arousing national consciousness once again. Plague appeared in Poona in 1897. British soldiers on duty there treated Indians in a very brutal manner. They molested women and defiled places of worship, exasperated the people. Two Europeans who were in charge of these operations were murdered, this provided an excuse for sterner

repressive measures being adopted. Natu Sardars were deported and Lokmanya Tilak was convicted of sedition and awarded a sentence of 18 months. Lokmanya's fame and reputation were considerably enhanced. The nation was in tears that their beloved leader was deprived of his liberty because he had the courage to condemn and censure the outrages perpetrated on his countrymen.

Lokmanya organized Ganpati and Shivaji festivals and thus by reviving old traditions and glories he wished to arouse the national self-respect of his people. After the partition he threw himself with full vigour into the movement. Round him rallied all the nationalist elements who were scattered in India but could not make themselves felt because they had no leader. In Tilak they found the real man to guide and direct them. In 1905 when the Congress session was being held in Benares, nationalists very rightly and very properly opposed the resolution of welcome to the Royal visitors. Leaving aside other questions how could a nationalist accord a welcome when it was in mourning The partition of Bengal had been made a settled fact. The whole of Bengal was very angry and the whole of India was in sympathy with her. It was indeed the height of self-debasement for the Congress to offer a welcome at such an hour of distress. That Tilak was outvoted does not cause surprise though it does make one feel small and humiliated.

Repression was let loose in full swing. The Government tried hard to meet the agitation by repression. This has always been the practice of irresponsible Governments and British Raj pursued it with full force. In April, 1906 the annual session of the Bengal Provincial Conference was held at Barisal with a Muslim patriot, Mr. Rasul in the chair. It was dispersed by the police who lathi-charged specially the young men in the audience. Surender Nath Bannerji was arrested and fined. Sjt. Aravindo Ghosh played a very prominent part in this movement. His command of English was wonderful and his writings were very much admired. His paper *Vande-Mataram*, in spite of continuous repression preached an unbending nationalism that the bureaucracy dreaded. "The hour for speeches and fine writing is past. The bureaucracy has thrown down the gauntlet. We take it up. Men of the Punjab, race of the lion, show these men who would stamp you into dust, that for one patriot they have taken away a hundred patriots, will rise in their places." He was prosecuted for conspiracy but finally acquitted. Mr. Aravindo Ghosh soon after retired from politics and left British

India. He has enriched Indian literature by contributions which are immortal. His voluntary Hijrat indicates the fairplay he expected from the British.

The year 1907 brought in train nothing but trouble to the country. It saw the country convulse to its depths. The first act opened with the deportation of Lala Lajpat Rai and of S. Ajit Singh. In the last month of 1908 several public men of Bengal were deported.

"The action of the Government in deporting men for reasons which it does not disclose is illegal, unconstitutional, tyrannical, arbitrary, impudently absurd and preposterous." Mr. Morley's answer to this charge in the House of Commons was the most outrageous and indefensible one. The privilege of defending oneself which can be claimed by the meanest of the criminals was denied to them. The Punjab officials were panic-stricken. They had imaginary fears of an outbreak as this was the year of 50th anniversary of the National Revolt of 1857. Every political move was for them a deep-laid scheme for the overthrow of British rule. Men occupying the highest position in the society and looked up to as their leaders by the people in Rawalpindi were placed in the dock as felons who had by their seditious speeches incited violent riots. The evidence on which these six lawyers of 'Pindi had been kept behind the bars for six months was suspicion, if not fabricated and there was not a shade of evidence to establish any sort of complicity on their part with any conspiracy against the British Crown. The Press prosecutions were started on flimsy and frivolous grounds. In some instances the Crown failed to secure a conviction. In many cases the defendants refused to plead and cheerfully went to prison and they must be blind indeed who could not see in that bold and brave attitude a new consciousness of nationality. When the editor of *Yogantar* was sent to jail there was a crowded meeting of Indian ladies in Calcutta not to console but to present a complimentary address to his mother who said in reply: "Bepin's useful career has just begun with his recent incarceration and his example will do more good than his mere presence as a humble worker in the midst of his countrymen." At Barisal conference the ladies flung away their ornaments when their husbands and sons were lathi-charged and humiliated by the Police, and took a vow to forego all luxuries till the men had learnt to assert their rights. The Government undertook a crusade against mere school-boys and they were either publicly flogged or condemned to hard labour. It called for the most intense indignation throughout the counrry. Indians have

eyes, hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affection and passions and it was impossible that such barbarous atrocities should not have hurt the national conscience of the whole of India.

On 30th April, 1908 Mrs. and Miss Kennedy were shot dead in Calcutta. This led to serious consequences. Anglo-India ran into hysterics and cried for revenge. The Government went mad and resorted to [repression. Lokmanya Tilak attributed anarchism to the unsympathetic rule of an alien bureaucracy. The Government ascribed it to the writings of Tilak and others of his thought and view. Lokmanya Tilak and the Nationalists of Bengal regretted and condemend the acts of violence but the Government paid no heed to such statements.

LOKMANYA'S TRIAL

The Government sanctioned prosection of Lokmanya Tilak under Section 124-A and 153-A. He was arrested on 24th June, 1908 and was committed to the criminal sessions of Bombay High Court presided over by Mr. Justice Davar. Mr. Jinnah appeared for Tilak and applied for bail which was refused. Mr. Baptista argued that if the Europeans were in a majority in the Jury, Tilak could not expect a fair consideration of his case as in the first place they would not understand Marathi in which the articles were originally written and secondly racial prejudice is bound to obscure their vision. His criticism was against its fellow countrymen and it would be expecting the impossible from them to give an unbiased and unprejudiced verdict. Mr. Baptista's arguments fell on deaf ears and instead of a common jury a special jury was instituted.

The trial commenced on 13th July. Practically one single article of June 9th was made the ground of 3 convictions and sentences on three different charges. Tilak's examination of some of the prosecution witnesses was so thorough and searching that it evoked for him the admiration of the legal profession. He proved that the translation of his article was not faithful. His speech lasted for more than 21 hours, and is even today looked upon as one of the most remarkable forensic utterances. The Jury passed the verdict of guilty against Tilak. The judge asked Tilak if he had anything to say. In reply Tilak said: " All I wish to say is that in spite of the verdict of the Jury I maintain that I am innocent. There are higher powers that rule the destinies of nations and individuals and it may be the Will of Providence that the cause which I represent may prosper more by my suffering than by remaining free."

The judge agreed with the verdict of the Jury and passed a sentence of six years' deportation. The news of the sentence spread like wild fire. Bazars were closed; schools and colleges were deserted; the mill hands of Bombay went on a strike for 6 days. Tilak was first taken to Sabarmati jail and then removed to Mandalay where he served his full sentence. His health had deteriorated because of hard labour, bad food, harsht reatment that he received there.

His wife had died while he was in Mandalay but he was not aware of this fact till he came back. He wrote a memorable book Gita Rahasya during this period. He was more or less treated as a felon. Tilak was set at liberty on 16th June, 1914.

TWENTY-THIRD SESSION

By the time of this Congress session the Moderates had recaptured much of their lost power. This was largely due to the announcement of the Morley-Minto reforms. The old Congressmen had something tangible to show for their slow and constitutional methods.

Moreover, Lokmanya Tilak had been removed by the bureaucracy from the arena of politics and the field was entirely in the hands of moderates. It is a remarkable fact that in 1897 when Lokmanya had been sentenced to 18 months' R. I. the Congress expressed its indignation. Surender Nath Bannerji, in a moving speech, had said that the nation was in tears. This time though the nation was in deeper mourning and was very much upset by the barbarous sentence but the moderates never expressed their resentment and indigination at such a heavy sentence passed on one of India's distinguished heroes. It is a sign of pitiable weakness that this and many other acts of unjust and fierce repression were permitted to pass almost unchallenged, even unnoticed, by the moderates.

The next phase of the development of the Congress constitution was really epoch-making. The Surat split naturally led those who organised the convention at Allahabad to frame a 'Rightist' constitution. The first step taken was to declare that the election of the duly chosen president could not be challenged. This article was introduced into the Congress constitution.

"The objects of the Indian National Congress are the attainment, by the people of India, of a system of Government similar to that enjoyed by the self-governing members of the

British Empire and a participation by them in the rights and responsibilities of the Empire on equal terms with those members."

The All-India Congress, Committee and the Subjects committee were reconstituted.

The objects of the Congress are to be achieved by constitutional means, by bringing about a steady reform of the existing administration and by promoting national unity, fostering public spirit and organising the intellectual, moral, economic, and industrial resources of the country." A clause was introduced in the constitution that any resolution that was repugnant to 3/4 of the Hindu or Muslim delegates was to be given up.

"This session was held at Madras in 1908 under the presidentship of Dr. Rash Behari Ghose.

Extracts from the Presidential address:

" The clouds are now breaking in blessings over your heads slaking the parched and thirsty earth. The time of the singing of birds is come and the voice of the bulbul is heard in our land.

" A younger generation will take up the work who will, I trust have some kindly thoughts for those, who too in their day strove to do their duty, however imperfectly, through good report, and evil report, with it may be said a somewhat chastened fervour, but I may say without boasting with a fervour as genuine as that which stirs and inspires younger hearts."

" We know that our hopes are not likely to be realised in a day. But to blot out the ideal is to take out the spring from the year. It is at once our solace, and our inspiration, our pole star to guide us. We are determined to fight with inextinguishable faith, with unwavering hope and strenuous patience."

"The Congress characterised Morley's answer in the House of Commons regarding the resurrection of rusty powers like Regulation III of 1818, as the most outrageous and indefensible answer ever given since Simon de Montfort invented Parliament."

Sir Rash Behari Ghose had joined the Congress as early as 1886 but did not take an active part in the affairs until 1906. He was the most literary of public men. His speeches form a delightful reading and are marked by ability, judgment and independence. He gave a princely benefaction to Calcutta University.

The boycott resolution was conspicuous by its absence and resolutions on Swadeshi and National education were watered

down. This Congress protested against a fresh burden of about 50 lacs of rupees which the British War office imposed on India.

The Resolution on Reforms ran as follows :

"This Congress desires to give expression to the deep and general satisfaction with which the Reform proposals formulated in Lord Morley's despatch have been received throughout the country. It places on record its sense of high statesmanship which had dictated the action of the Government in the matter. It tenders to Lord Minto and Lord Morley its most sincere and grateful thanks for their proposals. The Congress regards these as a large and liberal instalment of Reforms."

LOKMANYA TILAK



Swaraj is my Birth Right

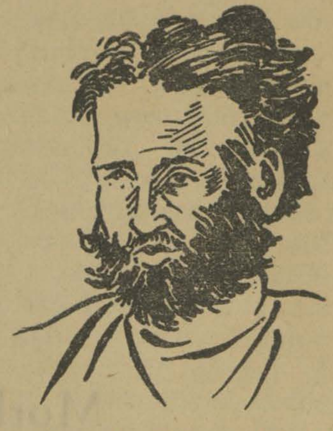


Bapu and Badshah Khan
They set the pace for the Nation

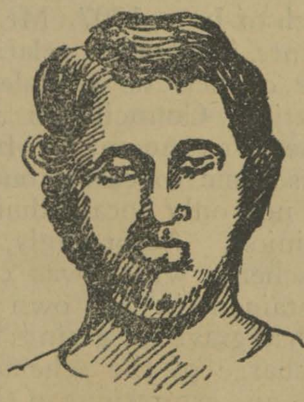
OUR MARTYRS



Kanai Lal Dutt



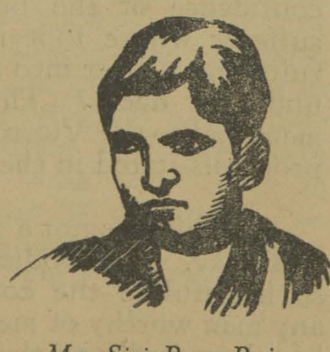
Mr. Wasudeo Balwant Phadke



Mr. Khudi Ram



Mr. Kotwal



Mr. Siri Ram Raju

To them the Grip of the British was more stifling than the hangman's Rope

CHAPTER XI

Morley-Minto Reforms

IN his budget speech of June, 1907, Mr. Morley adumbrated certain movements, in advance, relating principally to the formation of a council of notables and the expansion of the Legislative Councils in India both Imperial and Provincial. To the Government of India he assigned the duty of initiating a scheme to carry out these objects with instructions to consult not only local administrations, but also independent public opinion. Accordingly, the Government of India framed a draft scheme which was circulated in August, 1907. Mr. Morley retained in his own hands the ultimate decision. The Indians had grave misgivings because the European officials who were in charge of the scheme held views directly opposed to the wishes and aspirations of the Indians. Independent public opinion viewed with grave anxiety the attitude that the European officials held towards such proposals and propositions. It has always been like the quarrel between the shoemaker and the weaver, the old difficulty of reconciling the self-confidence of the professional artist with the feelings of the sufferer whose foot refuses to fit the model shoe. How can a ruling race enter into the feelings of those whom it wishes to keep under its heels? The Bombay Presidency Association sent a memorial to the Viceroy severely criticising and condemning the proposals stated in the Government Circular.

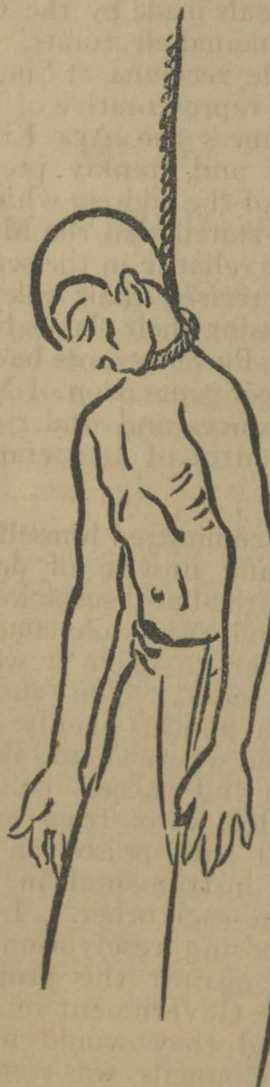
This was not a scheme of Reform. It was more of a practical joke. It embodied proposals so objectionable, so reactionary, so harmful to the country that no good word for it was said by any man worthy of mention anywhere in India. That scheme was based avowedly on the theory that a counterpoise to the influence

of educated Indians must be found and this was sought in a so-called council of notables and in class and communal representation carried to excess. The Madras Government's proposals made this scheme ridiculous altogether. This scheme was rejected by Mr. Morley. It did not deserve a better treatment. He sent a despatch on December 17, 1908. The Act of 1909 was a distinct improvement on the proposals made by the Government of India; but the serious evil of communal electorates was introduced. Lord Minto was its author. He received at Simla on October 1, 1906 an influential deputation, representative of Muslims of the whole country led by His Highness the Aga Khan. The deputation made preposterous claims and frankly preached the gospel of separatism. In the course of the address which was couched in the most loyal terms, it was stated that the Mohammedans of India, have always placed implicit reliance in the sense of justice and fair dealings, that have characterised their rulers and have in consequence abstained from pressing their claims by methods that might prove at all embarrassing. Recent events have stirred up feelings especially among the younger generation of Mohammedans, which might in certain circumstances and under certain contingencies, easily pass beyond the control of temperate council and sober guidance.

Lord Minto at once committed himself and his Government to the most unreasonable and unwise of demands, in the most thoughtless manner, and with almost suspicious completeness. This deputation was inspired and the Mohammedans were asked to make this demand in order to drive a wedge between the two major communities of India. The inspiration was from Simla because the British almost openly said that if Hindus and Muslims remain united where should they be. " Our safety and security and salvation and success demand that these two communities should be led away from each other. Separate electorates are a sweet and sure poison in the body politic of India. These have been instrumental in keeping the two communities wide apart from each other." Lord Morley wanted to mitigate the evil by proposing reservation of seats with joint electorates, but agitation against this proposal was immediately engineered in India. The Government of India was hostile to Lord Morley's proposals and they would not be defeated. The non-official majority in Councils was composed of both elected and nominated members which meant an overwhelming official majority in every one of them.

In short, the Morely-Minto Scheme of communal represen-

tation, different franchises, indirect election and official majority was forced on the country. People were not consulted in the matter and thus seeds of dissension, disruption and dismember ment of India were sown.



The glorious end of a Patriot.

CHAPTER XII

Congress Year By Year—(*Contd.*)

TWENTY-FOURTH SESSION.

THIS session was held at Lahore in 1909. The Hon'ble Pt. M. M. Malviya presided. The following are some extracts from his presidential address:

"The Presidentship of the Congress as has often been said is the highest honour that can come to an Indian.

"The regulations in connection with Reforms have created wide disappointment and dissatisfaction except in the limited circle of a section of Muslim friends. It was the educated class in India, who first felt the desire for the introduction of self-Government, the Government of the people through the elected representatives of the people in India. It was the educated class who organized the Indian National Congress with a view to protect and promote not the interest of any class, or creed, but the common interests of all Indians, irrespective of any consideration, of race, creed, or colour. The Europeans and Anglo-Indians have always arrayed themselves against Indians. It is sad to recall that as the Congress continues to grow in strength and influence, some of our Mohammedan fellow-subjects and some members of the landed aristocracy have come forward openly to oppose it. Mr. Dadabhoy Naoroji declared in words of burning conviction that Self-Government is the only and chief remedy. In Self-Government lies our hope, strength, and greatness. Till 1906 our Mohammedan brethren did not take any appreciable interest in the politics of their country, but now when some important constitutional changes are about to be brought about, Anglo-Indian bureaucracy has roused the Mohammedans of Aligarh school from their apathy and indifference. They suddenly developed an interest, an excessive interest too, in politics. Some special concessions have been given to Mohammedans which have been refused to non-Mohammedans. Let it be remembered that those

favours have been shown not out of any love for our Mohammedan brethren but only to keep them quiet, to keep them from standing shoulder to shoulder with their Hindu brothers to agitate for reforms. This policy of partiality will not live as it does not deserve to live.

"The objeets of the Congress are high, and honourable enough, to satisfy the cravings for activity of the most patriotic minds. The problems which press for consideration at our hands are both vital and numerous. The condition of our people is deplorable; vast millions of them do not get sufficient food to eat, and sufficient clothing to protect themselves from exposure and cold. They are born and live in insanitary surroundings and die premature preventible deaths. Humanity and patriotism alike demand that we should do all that lies in our power to ameliorate their condition. Let every particle of energy be devoted to the loving service of the motherland. There is no land on earth which stands more in need of such services than our own. It is true that we are labouring under numerous difficulties and disadvantages. Let not these daunt us. Duty demands that we must solve them. In union only lies the hope of a happy future for our country. Differences should be brushed aside, and all earnest patriots, all true lovers of the country, should unite in a common endeavour to promote common objects by methods and ways about which there is a common agreement throughout the country."

When the Congress met, the Regulations as well as the Reforms had been published. These caused greatest dissatisfaction. They showed that the bureaucracy in India had been at work to diminish the concessions which had been made. A manifesto issued by the Bengalee leaders, headed by Mr. Rash Behari Ghose and Mr. Surrender Nath Bannerji, contained the following statement:

"The Reforms Scheme was regarded as the beginning of a new era of conciliatory Government, which would be consummated by the modification of the partition of Bengal. But its further developments in which a system of separate class representation found a prominent place somewhat checked the first outburst of public enthusiasm and the disappointment was deepened by the pronouncement of Lord Morley, that he would be no party to any modification of the partition. The Regulations were felt to be in striking contrast to Lord Morley's great utterance in anouncing the Reforms. In several grave matters of principle, they were retrograde as compared with those framed under the parliamentary statute of 1892. In the main the regulations have reduced the

educated community to an insignificant minority, in a scheme which was largely due to their efforts."

The Congress passed the following resolutions:

This Congress while gratefully appreciating the earnest and arduous efforts of Lord Morley and Lord Minto in extending to the people of this country a fairly liberal measure, of constitutional reforms, as now embodied in the India Councils Act of 1909, deems its duty to place on record its strong disapproval of the creation of separate electorates, on the basis of religion, and regrets that the Regulations framed under the Act have not been framed in the same liberal spirit in which Lord Morley's despatch of last year was conceived. In particular they have caused widespread dissatisfaction:

(*a*) On account of the excessive and unfairly preponderant representation given to one particular religion.

(*b*) The unjust, invidious and humiliating distinctions made between the Muslim and non-Muslim subjects of His Majesty in the matter of the electorates, the franchise, and the qualification of candidates.

(*c*) The wide, arbitrary and unreasonable disqualifications and restrictions for candidates seeking election to the Councils.

(*d*) The general distrust of the educated classes, that runs through the whole course of the Regulations.

(*e*) The unsatisfactory composition of non-official majorities in the Provincial Councils.

It was keenly felt, as Surrender Nath Bannerji explained, that the educated classes who had been leaders in the Reforms movement were being made as ineffective as possible. The Government was determined to render them, if possible, innocuous. The Bureaucracy is bent upon having its revenge upon them for having persistently carried on the agitation which had resulted in the Reforms Scheme.

Pt. M. M. Malviya denounced what he called one of the most vicious features of the Reforms, *viz.*, Communal Representation. The Hindu, the Parsee, and Christian graduates of 30 years' standing, men like Guru Dass Bannerji, Dr. Bhandarkar, Sir Subramanya Iyer and Dr. Rashbehari Ghose have not been given a vote, which has been given to every Mohammedan graduate of 5 years' standing.

This Congress was remarkable also for another reason. The grievances of the Indians in Transvaal had created a profound impression, and the presence of a delegate, Mr. M.H.S.L. Polak, from

South Africa had brought the question once more to the forefront. Mr. Polak, an Englishman, for many years past had been the intimate friend and companion of Mr. Gandhi, sharing his house with him, and in every way identifying himself with the Indian cause. He had suffered much in consequence, and in 1913 went to prison with him.

The enthusiasm with which the appeal for funds was responded to, after Mr. Polak's address, showed that the Congress was looked up to for guidance and support by Indians in all parts of the world.

TWENTY-FIFTH SESSION

It was held at Allahabad in 1910, and was presided over by Sir William Wedderburn.

As described in the preceding pages he gave his best for India. He did very excellent work in espousing the cause of India in England. India held his whole heart, to the exclusion of every other subject. His abounding love for the people of this country stood all tests. Mr. Gokhale said of him, "He believed in us in spite of the obloquy of his own countrymen. He has believed in us in spite of appearances. He has believed in us in spite of ourselves. It is because he has so believed in us that he has been able to work through sunshine and storm and through good report and evil report. The picture of this great venerable Rishi of modern times, who has done this work for us, is a picture that is too venerable, too beautiful and too inspiring for words. It is a picture to dwell upon lovingly and reverentially and it is a picture to contemplate in silence."

He presided twice over the Congress sessions. When at the end of the year 1910 it was represented to him that in the best interests of India and with a view to cement the bonds of unity between the Hindus and Mohammedans it was necessary that he should accept the presidentship of this session, Sir William, at the age of 70 and in an indifferent state of health, responded to the call made upon him, even at the risk of his health.

The following are a few extracts from his address :

"I have passed a quarter of a century among you, and in one respect in which I shall not be found wanting, is in my good-will towards you, and the cause you represent. My sympathy with your aspirations is wholehearted, and I cherish an enduring faith in the future destiny of India. India deserves to be happy and I feel confident that brighter days are not far off.



Two Great Heroes of India's Battle for Freedom



The soldier with the sage

"Let us march with our face to the light, put in the sickle and reap. Our watchwords must be Hope, Conciliation, and United efforts.

"Let us not dwell on matters of controversy but cultivate a spirit of toleration, giving credit to all those who are true lovers of Mother India, and desire her welfare."

"A good illustration of what may be achieved by the Hindu and Mohammedans standing shoulder to shoulder in the service of India is supplied by the latest news from South Africa. I would submit to impatient idealists, that there is no cause for despair, as regards the Congress methods, and I would ask them not to play into the hands of our opponents, by discrediting the results of Congress work. Independent Indians will now be in a position to take the initiative on many important matters and press forward reforms."

Congress is now practically accepted as expressing independent public opinion throughout India. In India there is a newly born spirit of Self-Reliance. That is good but do not let it degenerate into dislike for the people of other lands. India possesses all the materials for Self-Government, there is her ancient civilization, reverence for authority and industrious and law-abiding population, and abundant intelligence among the ruling classes."

This year found a critical state of affairs on the communal front. The President intended to hold a conference of Hindus and Mohammedans with a view to bring about communal harmony. The passive Resistance struggle in South Africa was at its height and the Congress expressed its great admiration of the intense patriotism, courage and self sacrifice of the Indians in Transvaal, who were heroically suffering persecution in the interest of their countrymen.

Resolutions:

While recognising the necessity of providing for a fair and adequate representation in the Legislative Councils for the Mohammedans and other communities, where they are in a minority, this Congress disapproves of the regulations promulgated last year to carry out this object by means of separate electorates and in particular it urges upon the Government the justice and expediency of modifying the regulations framed under the Indian Councils Act of 1909 before another election comes on, so as to remove anamolous distinctions between the different sections of his Majesty's subjects in matters of franchise and the qualifications of candidates and restrictions for candidates seeking election to the Councils. The Congress also urges a modification

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of the regulations, where necessary, relating to the composition of non-official majorities in the Provincial Councils so as to render them effective for practical purposes.

The Congress deprecated the extension, or application of the principle of separate communal electorate for municipalities, district boards, or the local bodies.

Resolutions regarding Seditious Meetings Act, Press Act and Mr. Gokhale's Elementary Education Bill were passed.

Further amendments to the constitution of the Congress were referred to a sub-committee. Protest was made against the annually increasing military expenditure.

This session was characterised by a marked absence of enthusiasm and by a general chilliness of atmosphere. The enthusiasm which the Congress movement had been able to evoke, owing to the participation of the younger men with more advanced ideas, was now slowly evaporating. On account of the new formulas of membership and the rigid exclusion of the extremists, the national organization tended to find itself quite out of touch with more radical thinkers. It was rapidly becoming an institution, devoted merely to half-hearted measures without the energy to meet the full current of the more progressive forces, which were gathering strength in every direction. Life seemed to have gone out of the body of the Congress. A study of the resolutions passed confirms this. The only constructive and helpful suggestion at Allahabad seems to have been the strong protest made against the system of communal electorates which had been introduced by the Morley-Minto Reforms.

The truth of the matter is that the Congress of 1910 was completely dominated by the prospect of reconciliation with the Government because of Lord Hardinge's agreeing to receive a Congress deputation. Strange as this may seem to-day ever-since Lord Curzon had refused to receive Sir Henry Cotton, as the head of a Congress deputation its leaders had not been given any opportunity of putting their views before the head of the administration. Lord Hardinge's sympathetic attitude and Mr. Gokhale's assurances that great things might be hoped for under the new regime were largely responsible for the moderate tone of the proceedings of the Allahabad Session.

An address was presented to the Viceroy in which it was stated : " We look forward to a period of peace, progress, and prosperity for India, under the guidance of one who was a trusted friend of our beloved King-Emperor Edward the Peace-maker

whose loss we shall never cease to deplore." The Viceroy in a cordial reply stated that the aim of the Government of India has been to promote the material welfare and moral development of the Indian people and to meet out even-handed justice to all races, classes and creeds.

The Allahabad correspondent of *Madras Standard* wrote :

"The break-up of public life that had followed the rigorous working of the new repressive acts, has led to complete demoralisation in portions of Bengal and the Central Provinces. Active public life has not only become impossible in them but also is positively dreaded because of the increase of police activities to which it leads. In one word the Congress is the only avenue left in all India for the ventilation of just grievances and this point is receiving greater and greater attention at the present moment."

There was a very small attendance of young people at the Lahore Congress because of the prohibitory orders of the local educational authorities as well as on account of the gulf which was widening between the right and left wing of the Congress.

THE PRESS ACT

Lord Lytton's Press Act had caused grave resentment among the people. Mr. Gladstone condemned it, and when he became Prime Minister and when Lord Ripon held the charge of India it was withdrawn but it has always been the main aim of the British that minimum amount of freedom should be allowed to the Press. On the one hand Reforms were introduced. However defective and halting they were, undoubtedly they were an improvement in some respects on the older regime but on the other hand almost the first legislative measure of the first Morley-Minto Council was the Press Act of 1910. This Act was passed in great hurry on the plea that terrorist activities were being encouraged by extremist writings in the Press. The Press Bill in its original form was far more offensive and stiff. The Indian Law Member, Sir S. P. Sinha, refused to be a party to it and tendered his resignation when he found himself in a minority of one in the Executive Council. Neither Lord Morley nor Lord Minto was willing to lose him. A compromising measure was adopted but even then the Act was very drastic and has done great mischief, during all the years it has been in operation. It authorised Government to demand securities from new printing presses up to Rs. 2,000 and old printing presses up to Rs. 5,000. For various minor causes fresh declarations had to be made by existing

presses and hence security was demanded. As soon as the war broke out in 1914 a notorious instance of the misuse of this Act occurred in respect of a pamphlet published by Maulana Mohammad Ali which was forfeited, without any notification. The matter was taken to the High Court of Calcutta. The Chief Justice remarked: " Mr. Mohammad Ali has lost his book but he retains his character and he is free from all stigma." Mrs. Besant lost Rs. 20,000 under the Press Act. A deputation of the Press Association waited on Lord Chelmsford and got a severe rebuke and rebuff.

This Press Act was conceived in a spirit of repression. It reduced the Indian Press from its position as an independent critic of the Government to that of an institution entirely dependent on sufferance. Within all the years that it had been in operation there had been a regular carnival of Press prosecutions in which newspapers had been suppressed, printing presses confiscated, and their securities forfeited to an extent which bewildered the public and alarmed the journalists. The liberty of the press was taken away and the highest tribunals in the land declared themselves powerless to protect it. When the Act was passed the extreme rigour of the measure was admitted but an assurance was given that it would be administered with care and consideration. This assurance has been much more honoured in its breach than in its observance.

This Act was, however, repealed in 1922.

ANNULMENT OF PARTITION

The year of 1911 was marked by one of the greatest changes which had ever been made in the administration of India during the whole period of British rule. It was decided to commemorate the King's visit by changing the capital of India from Calcutta to Delhi and at the same time to revise the partition of Bengal in such a way that the Bengalee language area should remain intact. The secret was kept with remarkable success and the King's visit was inaugurated with this startling announcement which changed the map of India.

By making Calcutta the capital of a province rather than the capital of India, the Royal declaration equalised the provincial areas both in dignity and importance. By doing so it served to help forward the Congress organization which was on a provincial basis. It also made it easier for the executive centre of the Congress to be fixed at the most convenient place in India. Its direct and immediate effect was to strengthen indefinitely the hands of the moderates who could lay claim with some truth that by constitutional

agitation they had undone what had been called a settled fact.

Thus it was in an unwonted atmosphere of official favour that this session was held owing to the presence of the King in India and the important announcement of the modification of partition of Bengal, in the most dramatic circumstances. This session was dominated by these two facts.

In the *Daily Telegraph* a well-known publicist wrote, " In particular the far-reaching reforms for which Lord Morley is responsible, may confidently be attributed to the pressure exercised by the Indian National Congress and it might be imagined that a body which had achieved such a success would have acquired as a consequence, increased influence and power. The very contrary appears to be the case. The success achieved has been the undoing of the Congress."

There is much truth in this observation for it can hardly be questioned that the moderates failed to give the nation the lead which it so badly needed. The fact was that it did not reflect the rising spirit in the country as a whole.

TWENTY-SIXTH SESSION

This session was held in Calcutta in 1911. Pandit Bishen Narayan Dar presided.

Pandit Bishen Narayan Dar was one of the most learned and yet modest of men of India. He belonged to U.P. He was a great writer and many of his writings are read with interest. He is one of the earlier day politicians who made a mark in the Congress history by his devotion to this national institution.

In 1903 he moved the resolution on 'Official Secrets Bill' and said, " Lord Curzon is astonished that this should be described as Russianising the administration. I am astonished that anyone should be so imperfectly informed regarding the Russian Government, as to think that it has got anything in its purely Civil Laws, so arbitrary and so disastrous to the Civil Liberties of the people as Lord Curzon's Bill, when passed, would be in this country."

It was hoped that Mr. Ramsay Macdonald would preside but the death of Mrs. Macdonald had called him away from India and Pandit Bishen Narayan was unexpectedly asked to preside at the session.

In his address he said :

" The old order is changing and giving place to something new and better. The greatest wound in the heart of India was the partition of Bengal, a most unwise and unfortunate measure of a

reactionary Viceroy. The Government despatch says " Various circumstances have forced upon us the conviction that the bitterness of feeling engendered by the partition of Bengal is both widespread and unyielding. It is responsible for the growing estrangement of a very serious character in many parts of the country, between Hindus and Mohammedans. This partition is annulled. There will be a united presidency under a Governor-in-Council. This annulment is a triumph of constitutional agitation.

" Delhi is the eternal city of Hindustan and is associated with the most glorious and romantic memories of both Hindus and Mohammadans and this change of capital of India from Calcutta to Delhi will be most deeply appreciated by Indians.

British rule in India has its defects and shortcomings which are neither slight nor few.

"The root cause of most of our misfortunes, which if not corrected, forebodes serious disorders in the future, is the growth of an unsympathetic and illiberal spirit in the bureaucracy towards the new born hopes and ideals of the Indian people. While a new India has gradually been rising up that spirit too has been growing, and so a critical situation has arisen. The Bureaucracy with its vested interests, its domineering habits, its old traditions of obsolete and unquestioned authority, suspicious of knowledge, and averse to innovation like every close corporation, cut off from the people by its racial exclusiveness and wedded to a paternal system of Government under which it has so long enjoyed power and pelf but which is discordant with the more liberal ideas of the day, is antagonistic to the educated classes who are filled with new knowledge and are conscious of their political rights. The Bureaucracy as a body has never been in sympathy with the new aspirations of educated India."

When Lord Morley and Lord Minto started a repressive policy, the bureaucracy supported them most heartily and cried for more repression and coercion.

" Reforms are defective, but our complaint is against Regulations which are extremely faulty, and in some important aspects defeat the object of the Act. A genuine craving for popular institutions is observable on all sides, and the whole country feels the vivifying touch of the spirit of nationalism which lies at the bottom of what is called unrest, and which, in various forms and disguises, pervades strife and inspires endeavour.

"In the pursuit of a high ideal we must not forget the difficulties that beset our path. Long and weary is the journey that

lies before those who undertake to mould a people into the unity of a nation. Our agitation, in order to be effective, must be national, not sectarian, persistent not spasmodic, directed by intelligence and wisdom, and not impulsive and reckless. India needs bold and enthusiastic characters, not men of pale hopes, and middling expectations but courageous natives, fanatics in the cause of their country.

'Whose breath is agitation.

And whose life a storm whereon they ride.'

I recognise the difficulties of the high task which our duty to our motherland has laid on us, but I am not discouraged or daunted by them. We were a great people once, we shall be a great people again. Patience, courage and self-sacrifice are needed. That day will soon come, when this period of suffering and strife shall come to an end, and India, on the stepping stones of her dead self, shall rise to higher stage of national existence."

Usual resolutions were passed. Abolition of indenture labour in South Africa. Congress congratulated Gandhiji upon the repeal of Anti-Asiatic legislation.

TWENTY-SEVENTH SESSION

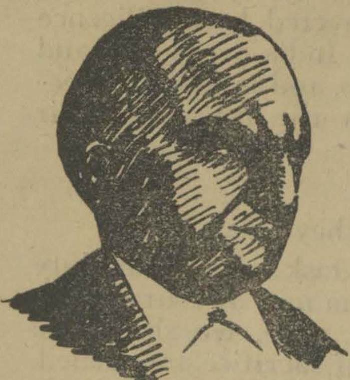
It was held in 1912 at Bankipore. Mr. R. N. Mudholkar presided.

Mr. Mudholkar occupied a prominent position among the earlier Congress leaders. He worked hard for the Congress. His first association with the Congress was in 1888. He was a laborious student of Indian politics covering a wide range of interests. Agricultural indebtedness, poverty and economic uplift, including technical education were his favourite subjects in which he had specialised himself.

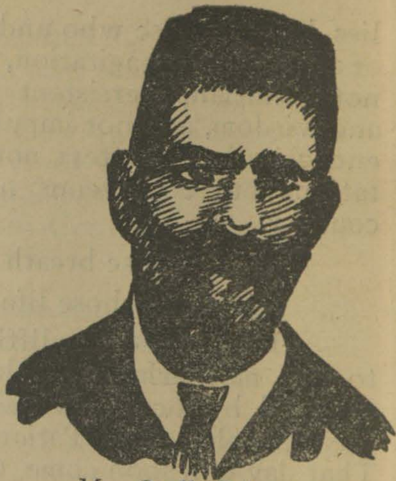
In his presidential address he said :

"The sons of India have before them a high and mighty task, which is as noble as arduous. The inheritors of great civilizations, lofty ideals and stirring traditions, the people of this land, have glorious mission to create a nation by the fusion of various races, creeds and castes, and to weld together communities which have been in sharp antagonism to each other. The people of India have a great mission to fulfil, a great part to play, in the progress of the world and it is to enable us to effectually perform this sacred duty that we are striving to reach our goal.

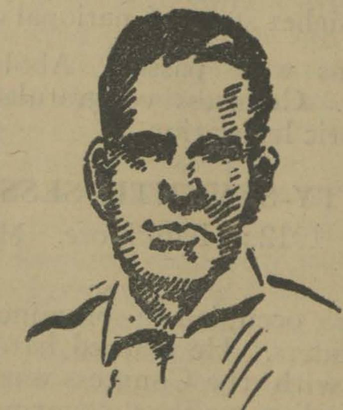
THE IMMORTALS



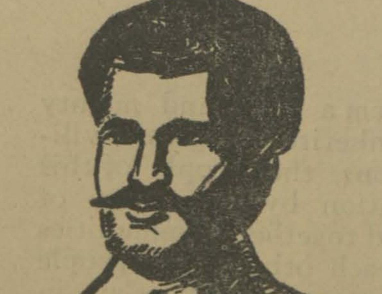
Mr. Amir Chand



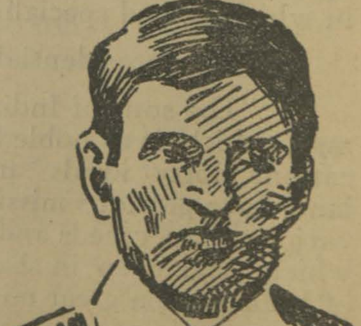
Mr. Oudh Behari



S. Kartar Singh Sarabha



Mr. Sohan Lal



Mr. Vishnu Pingley

The leaders of the Congress will have to devote greater attention to rouse popular interest, to keep it steady when aroused, and to have a network of organizations to give articulate expression to it. They must now direct greater attention and more time to the practical treatment of the questions concerning Indian administration and its machinery. There can be no real or solid political advance, without social advance and moral and spiritual regeneration. So long as the masses remain steeped in ignorance and depressed classes are regarded as untouchable, so long as the mothers of the families, and mistresses of households are kept without knowledge, in the seclusion of the purdah, not capable of participating in intellectual pursuits, or public matters, so long as class is divided aginst class, caste against caste, race against race, and clannishness, and sectional selfishness way the actions of the members of the different communities, so long as true brotherly feeling and devotion to duty do not become the main guiding principles of our life, so long shall our aspirations remain a dream. It is only when Indians become a virile nation, whose intellectual powers, and practical capacities, are expanded by knowledge, and training, amongst whom the moral virtues of truthfulness, courage, faithfulness, industry, and perseverance have been fully developed, and whose whole life is dominated by patriotism and duty, it is only then that our beloved motherland will become once again what she was in the ancient past."

Congress expressed disappointment at the non-removal of the defects in the Reforms and Regulations, condemned the injustice of keeping the higher ranks of the army closed against Indians. The Congress expressed its deep resentment, sorrow and indignation, at the throwing of bomb on Lord Hardinge who was making a formal state entry into Delhi. Congress opined that a person ignorant of English language should be ineligible for membership of local bodies. It reiterated the demand for elected majority in Imperial and Provincial councils. It condemned the extension of the system of separate electorates to local bodies.

The Government of India despatch of August 25, 1911, announcing that provincial autonomy was the definite aim of the administration, had put new hope into the minds of the Congress leaders. The President declared that the profound significance of the announcement of Provincial autonomy as the goal in an important state document could not possibly be gainsaid. Indians had every reason to feel immensely strengthened and fortified by that declaration.

The most important resolution of this year was, that concerning the treatment of Indians in South Africa which again came into prominence in a very urgent manner. On the motion of Mr. Gokhale who had just returned from that country, and had inquired into the grievances of the local Indians, the Congress adopted a resolution "drawing attention to the position of Indians in South Africa and other British colonies and urging that the system of indented labour was undesirable and should be abolished, and calling on the Government to prohibit further recruitment of Indian labour under contract of indenture. In a most impressive speech Mr. Gokhale pointed out the hardships of Indians in South Africa and gave a history of the Passive Resistance Movement organized and led by Mr. Gandhi, and this was the introduction of Gandhiji and his movement to India. The Congress passed a vote of admiration for the heroic endeavours and unparalleled sacrifice of Gandhiji and his worthy followers. The spirit in which resolutions were passed at this Congress can be gathered from Mr. Surrender Nath Bannerji who while moving a resolution, said: "The Royal visit was an era of peace, concord and tranquillity and there was no doubt it would culminate in beneficient results. The Public Service Commission had opened up the prospects of wider employment of Indians in the government services. This prospect when fulfilled would lead to an autonomous self-government which was an ordinance of nature and had been the principal plank in the Congress platform."

Over the gates of the huge Congress pandal were inscribed the names Crewe; George V; Hardinge, and this in spite of Lord Crewe's disclaimer of Lord Hardinge's despatch.

The speech of the President was filled with the spirit of hope because of this new attitude of the Government of India. He declared that they could discern the change, amounting almost to the birth of a new spirit in the attitude of the official mind towards Indians and their aspirations. There was far greater insistence by responsible statesmen and administrators on trust and confidence in the people and on the necessity of consulting them on drawing them and the Government into closer bonds of co-operation and mutual esteem.

This session was overshadowed by an attempted outrage on the life of Lord Hardinge by the throwing of the bomb on the day of his state entry into Delhi. This outrage took place only a few days before the assembling of the Congress and cast a dark shadow over the whole proceedings. The only relieving feature

of 1912 was the welcome fact that at this Session a large number of Mohammedan delegates had deliberately joined the Congress because of its moderation, and their presence greatly added to its prestige and importance as a political organization. Mr. Mazhar-ul-Haq who was the Chairman of the Reception Committee said: "That already a great and powerful party of liberal Mussalmans had arisen whose aims and ideals were the same as those of the Congress and this was the party which was bound to lead in future the Muslims of India."

TWENTY-EIGHTH SESSION

This session was held at Karachi in 1913 under the presidentship of Hon'ble Nawab Syed Mohammad.

In his Presidential address he said :

" The Congress has, from its very inception, set before itself the ideal of a united Indian nationality, and has been consistently advocating the cause of the Indian people as a whole, without being influenced by party or sectarian considerations, incompatible with that high ideal. The Congress well deserves the credit for the immense changes brought about in the Government of the country.

" There is an increasing rapprochement between Hindus and Muslims. The All-India Muslim League has passed a resolution that the future development and progress of the people of India depend on the harmonious working and co-operation of the various communities and hopes that leaders of both sides will periodically meet together to find a *modus operandi* for joint and concerted action in questions of public good. I cordially welcome this spirit, and I rejoice in this changed attitude of the Muslim League. If this spirit of co-operation and mutual goodwill be maintained and steadily promoted, the day should be near at hand when the two sister communities will be found working shoulder to shoulder for the cause of their national destiny.

" The decade that is closing with the current year,is a momentous period in the history of our country, a period of stress and storm such as marks great upheavals in the march of humanity. I am exceedingly happy to bear testimony to the important fact that the misunderstanding and distrust that divided the two communities in the country have become almost a thing of the past.

May I earnestly request my Hindu brethren to embrace this opportunity, to step forward and to clasp the extended hand in a

spirit of earnestness, of goodwill, and of appreciation. When harmony has to be restored and joint work has to be done, we must ignore trifles which actuate small minds, and concentrate our activities upon the larger work of consolidation. Let us strive for unity amongst us, for the advancement of the nation, and for bringing the forces of progress, and of solidarity, into line with our achievements in the past, and of our expectations for the future. We must not lose a minute to take advantage of the tide of national unity which has inflowed in this our motherland. That tide by God's grace will sweep away in its majestic onward course, the unnatural and artificial barrier of race, colour, and religion."

The Karachi Congress saw the beginnings of Hindu-Muslim unity. It placed on record its appreciation of the adoption by the All-India Muslim League of the idea of Self-Government for India and endorsed the plea of that body for harmonious co-operation between the two communities.

It was a forerunner of the Lucknow Pact. Specific proposals of reform were made regarding Indian Council.

1. That the present Council of the Secretary of State be abolished.

2. That the salary of the Secretary of State for India should be placed on the English estimates.

3. That the total number of members should not be less than nine.

4. That the elected portion should not be less than one-third.

5. That the remaining portion should consist of officials who have served in India for not less than ten years and who have not been away from India for more than 2 years.

6. That this Council be advisory and not administrative.

7. That the term of office of each member should be five years.

The Congress expressed satisfaction at the recognition by the Government of India of the necessity of introducing Provincial Autonomy. It protested against the provisions of the Immigration Act.

Great expectations were raised ,because of the change of attitude of the Muslim League towards Self-Government and

Hindu-Muslim problems. Mr. Bhupendra Nath Basu made the following remarks:

"Hindus and Muslims must concentrate their attention on the one united ideal, for the India of to-day is not the India of Hindus and Muslims, but the India in which all have a share. The India of the future will be a stronger, nobler, greater, higher and aye, a brighter India than was realised by Asoka in the plenitude of his power, a better India than was revealed to Akbar in the wildest of his visions." Mr. Wacha said that the Congress had entered on a new nativity and with the New Star they would achieve new success.

This session was chiefly occupied with the question of the status of Indians in South Africa. This question had been discussed both on the Platform and the Press during the whole year. Mr. Gokhale, in spite of serious illness, had pleaded the cause of those who were offering passive resistance in Natal. A pause had come just before the Congress met and Gandhiji had been just released in order to carry on negotiations with General Smuts at Pretoria. Lord Hardinge, as Viceroy, had spoken out in Madras expressing the indignation, burning deep, which Indians felt at the humiliations which had been thrust upon their fellow countrymen in Natal. He also condemned the shooting which had taken place on the estates with many casualties.

Abhorrence was expressed by the Congress at the cruel treatment to which Indians had been subjected in the recent strike. The personnel of the South Africa Union Committee was objected to because two of its members were already known to be biased and because it did not include persons who commanded the confidence of Indians in South Africa. The resolution went on to state that while tendering its most respectful thanks to His Excellency the Viceroy for the statesman-like pronouncement of the policy of the Government of India on the South African question; it requested the Imperial and Indian Governments to take the steps needed to redress the grievances relating to the question of £3 tax, indentured labour, domicile, the education test, the validity of Indian marriages, and other questions bearing on the status of Indians in South Africa.

It then acknowledged its warm and grateful appreciation of the heroic struggle carried on by Gandhiji and his co-workers, and called upon the people of India of all classes and creeds to continue to supply them with funds.

It was at this Congress that the name of Gandhiji received a prominence that marked already his future greatness.

TWENTY-NINTH SESSION

This session was held at Madras in 1914. Sjt. Bhupendra Nath Basu presided. He was a successful solicitor in Calcutta with a large practice and gave his time to politics gladly, and his oratory was undoubtedly of a highly cultured type. He was able almost to act his part, and display considerable emotion, so much so, that one big leader humorously described him as the man with melodramatic countenance, and chemical tears in his eyes. These were physiological and psychological.

He was made a member of the Secretary of State's Council.

The following are some of the extracts from his Presidential address:

"If English rule in India meant the canonisation of a bureaucracy, if it meant perpetual domination and tutelage; it would be a curse to civilization, and a blot on humanity. The Congress and the ideals it represents hold me by the roots which have penetrated into the innermost recesses of my soul.

"We are involved in a struggle for life and death. The mind is absorbed in the great issues now hanging in the battlefields of Europe, where our brethren, British and Indians, are mingling their blood in the cause of Honour, Liberty and Justice.

"One of the principal functions of the Congress is to discharge the duties of His Majesty's opposition. At the present moment and in the present crisis, the functions of the Congress must necessarily remain in abeyance. We have our quarrels, our differences, our grievances, but these domestic matters, however grave they may be, must wait.

"The basis of our life, political and social, must be self-respect, and mutual good-will.

"It is no use looking backward. No use in vain regrets. Let us be ready for the future, and I visualise it. I see my country occupying an honoured and proud place in the comity of Nations. I see India rejuvenated, and re-incarnate in the glories of the future, broadened by the halo of the past.

"What does it matter if a solitary raven croak from the sand banks of the Jamuna and the Ganges? I hear it not, my ears are filled with the music of the mighty rivers flowing into the sea, scattering the message of the future. Let us live as the ancients lived in the purity of heart so that their message may be fulfilled. Let us forget the barriers of man's creation. Let us be humble

and forget the pride of self. Let us step across the barriers of prejudice. Let us always be with our hand on the plough, preparing the soil for the harvest of the future. Let our heart strings be attuned to God and Country, and then no power on earth can resist the realisation of that message, the fulfilment of the Destiny that is ours. And assembled in this tabernacle of the people, let us pray to Him who knoweth all hearts, to grant us grace and strength that we may deserve, and bear this future and this destiny.

"I would not flee from my own convictions. I don't like the attitude of being willing to wound but afraid to strike. Bold issues must be boldly faced. National regeneration requires manliness and is not advanced by the methods of the Camarilla.

Resolutions:

War had been declared in Europe and the Congress made profuse declarations of loyalty and promised all help in the prosecution of the war. Demanded that higher ranks of the Army should be thrown open to Indians.

THIRTIETH SESSION

This was held in 1915 in Bombay under the Presidentship of Sir Satyendra Prasad Sinha. Sir S. P. Sinha was the first Indian to be taken on the Viceroy's Executive Council. He is the only Indian who has so far been appointed as Under Secretary of State for India. He is the only Indian to be raised to peerage. His position and learning were of an unchallengeable character. He was the Law Member when Press Act was passed in 1910. He was a very moderate politician, essentially an ultra-conservative. He was altogether out of tune with the new spirit and ceased to interest himself in politics after the Bombay Session. He was new to his duties and was largely influenced by the elderly Congressmen.

The Congress of 1915 was essentially a moderate Congress. It had all the prestige that clings round the name of an ex-Law Member of the Government of India. His speech was a very reactionary one.

At this session the first signs of the great revival in public interest in the Congress after the Surat affair became visible. 2,259 delegates attended.

The following are a few extracts from the presidential address:

"We want to make it perfectly clear if we have not done

so already that there is no one among us willing to cause the slightest embarrassment to the Government. We seek no capital out of the service so ungrudgingly rendered by our countrymen to the Empire. There is not, I trust, a single person in our camp who expects Reforms, as the price or the reward of our loyalty.

"It seems to me that the only satisfactory form of self-government to which India aspires cannot be anything short of government of the people, for the people, and by the people.

"The end will not come by impatience.

"Day will not break the sooner because we get up before twilight.

"The condition of our country is like that of a man whose whole bodily frame is suffering from severe injuries and grievous lesions have been put in a steel frame by a skilful surgeon. This renders it necessary for the injured man, as the highest duty to himself to wait quietly and patiently in splints and bandages even in a steel frame until nature resumes her active processes. The knitting of bones, and the granulation of the flesh, require time. Perfect quiet, and repose even under the severest pain is necessary. It will not do to make too great a haste to get well. An attempt to walk too soon will only make the matter worse and above all, the aid of the surgeon is indispensable and it is foolish to grudge the necessary fee.

"A new spirit of self-sacrifice, a new interest in the weak and suffering has been created. Self-indulgence is giving place to self-sacrifice. It seems to me that under the benign dispensation of an inscrutable Providence, we shall emerge into a new era of peace, and good-will, and our motherland will occupy an honoured place in the Empire, with which her fortunes are indissolubly linked, and we shall be the free and equal citizens of that great empire, bearing its burdens, sharing its responsibilities and participating in its heritage of freedom and glory as comrades and brethren."

Usual resolutions were passed.

THIRTY-FIRST SESSION

This was held at Lucknow in 1916. The Hon'ble Ambica Charan Mozumdar presided. He was a prominent lawyer. He was actively associated with the Congress almost since its birth, and had been a faithful adherent of its policy and programme. He is author of a fine and famous book on the Congress entitled : *Indian National Revolution.*

Extracts from his presidential address :

" Even the darkest cloud is said to have its silver lining and in this vale of sorrow there is hardly any misfortune which has not both a positive and negative side.

" If the united Congress was buried at Surat it is reborn to-day at Lucknow, in the garden of Wajid Ali Shah. After nearly ten years of painful separation and wanderings through the wilderness of misunderstandings and the mazes of pleasant controversies, each widening the breach and lengthening the chain of separation both the wings of the Indian Nationalist Party have come to realise, that united they stand, but divided they fall, and brothers had at last met brothers and embraced each other with the gush and ardour peculiar to a reconciliation after a long separation. Blessed are the peace-makers. Honour, all honour to those who in this suicidal civil war held the olive branch of peace, and glory to the patriotic good sense of the belligerents on both sides who having realised the true position and responsibility have at a psychological moment so wisely buried their hatchets and closed their ranks.

" The ideal of the Congress has long been well-defined and no new ideas are needed either to amplify or illustrate it, nor are fresh ideas as abundant as blackberries so that whoever passes by may pick up any number of them.

"The country has many grievances, and the Congress has made certain demands.

"Lord Morley once said that he cannot give us the 'moon but we were never so moonstruck as to ask for moon and his Lordship has no fears that he has given us something more substantial than mere moonshine.

"The bureaucracy which now rules the country is despotism, condensed and crystallised. It is not accountable to the people. It is responsible only to itself. It is essentially conservative in its temperament and thoroughly unprogressive in its character. It holds all the threads of the administration within the hollow of its palm and it does not release or relax any of them. It is extremely jealous of its powers and intolerant of criticism.

"The people have outgrown this system and a new spirit has arisen in the country. It is the manifestation of a democratic force which is transforming the destinies of an old world to a new order of things.

"In a despotic form of Government everything is done for the people and nothing by the people. Its greatest drawback

is that it makes the people, whom it governs, impotent to help themselves.

" Despotism has prepared its own coffin and has written on it its own epitaph with its own hand.

"A Government must always conform itself to the changing environments and adapt itself to the ideas and requirements of the community which it is called upon to govern.

" In India the Press with all its difficulties and disabilities has played an important part in the evolution of National Life and its chequered history is no mean evidence of the firm hold it has over the public mind and the sustaining energies of a growing people. The Press Act of 1910, conceived in a spirit of repression, has reduced the Indian Press, from its position as an independent critic of the Government, to that of an institution entirely dependent on its sufferance. There has been a regular carnival of Press prosecutions in which newspapers have been suppressed, presses confiscated and their securities forfeited to an extent which has bewildered the public and alarmed the journalists.

" On account of the Arms Act, a whole nation has been emasculated and degraded, not only in their own estimation, but also in the estimation of other races, not in any way superior to them, and reduced them to a condition of absolute helplessness.

"Slaves at home can never be treated as freemen abroad. They are slaves who cannot help themselves.

" Call it Home Rule, call it Self-Rule, call it Swaraj it is all one and the same thing. It is Representative Government."

" The Congress and the Muslim League have come to meet at the same place and the day may not be far distant when in spite of the siren song, which has so far diverted their course, they will come to meet in the same pavilion and at the same time.

"The Hindu-Muslim question has been settled, and both the communities have agreed to make a united demand for Self-Government.

" The All-India Congress Committee, and the representatives of the Muslim League, who recently met in conference at Calcutta, after two days' deliberations in one voice resolved to make a joint demand for a Representative Government in India. The vital issue has been solved and the main point has been gained.

"A mighty wave of changes is surging throughout the world and India is passing through a momentous transition. Her future is in your hands, you can make, or mar that future. If I were asked what was the first demand of Motherland upon her children, I would unhesitatingly answer that is Patriotism. And the second? Patriotism, and the third? Patriotism. By this I mean that supreme virtue which enlightens the head, and ennobles the heart, and under the heavenly inspiration of which a man forgets his self, and merges his individuality, like a drop in the ocean, in the vast all-absorbing interest of his country; feeding only on self-sacrifice and growing on what it feeds. To the Indian Nationalists their country must be their religion, taught by no priests but by the beating hearts, and her welfare their common faith, which make the many one. Nations are not born but made. You must stand on your own legs and be prepared to fight it out with heart within and God overhead.

"Be ambitious, but not proud, be humble, but aspire to a nobler, manlier and healthier life. Reverses there must be, but these should stiffen your backs. Do not despair, for despair is the key-note of failure. Sink all your differences in a supreme common cause. Unite and stand solidly shoulder to shoulder, resolve either to conquer or to die. What is life worth if we cannot live like men?

" Firm and resolute in your purpose, be always manly and dignified in your attitude, and sober and cautious in your hopes. There is no royal road to Freedom:

> What avail you wealth, your learning.
> Empty titles sordid trade.
> True Self-Rule were worth them all,
> Nations by themselves are made"

The Lucknow Congress was historic in many respects; there were several candidates. Mrs. Besant who was a favourite with the extremists received 25 votes and Mr. Mozumdar received 62 votes. The outlook of the moderates had broadened and the extremists did not want to be left outside the deliberations of the Congress which was making history. Bepin Chandra Pal, Tilak, Besant, all had come to attend the Congress Session. Mr. Mozumdar struck once more the full note of Swaraj which Dadabhoy had uttered at Calcutta 10 years before.

Enlivening spectacle of Tilak and Khaparde fraternising with Rash Behari Ghose and Surrender Nath Bannerji was the salient feature of this session and more enlivening was the fraterni-

sation of Hindus and Mohammedans. The Congress and the Muslim League held their sessions at Lucknow and a joint Reforms Scheme was sent to the Viceroy. This Congress united Moderates and Nationalists, and the Congress and the Muslim League had cemented friendship and promoted good-will between Hindus and Mohammadens. The Muslim League for the first time, declared Self-Government as its objective and joined hands with the Congress to make a demand of it in the most clear and unambiguous terms.

Vigorous protests were made against the extensive use of Defence of India Act and Regulation III of 1818 in depriving Indian Nationalists of their liberty without a trial.

Resolutions condemning Arms Act and Press Act were passed.

Resolution asking the people to support the Swadeshi movement was passed.

Lord and Lady Meston attended the Congress. Welcome address was presented to them to which they made a suitable reply.

THE CONGRESS-LEAGUE SCHEME

That having regard to the fact that the great communities of India are the inheritors of ancient civilizations, and have shown great capacity for Government and administration, to the progress in education, and public spirit made by them during a century of British Rule, and further having regard to the fact that the present system of Government does not satisfy the legitimate aspirations of the people, and has become unsuited to the existing conditions and requirements, the Congress is of opinion that the time has come when His Majesty the King-Emperor should be pleased to issue a proclamation announcing that it is the aim and intention of British Policy to confer Self-Government on India at an early date.

That the Congress demands that a definite step should be taken towards Self-Government by granting the Reforms contained in the scheme prepared by the All-India Congress Committee in concert with the Reform Committee appointed by the All-India Muslim League.

That in the reconstruction of the Empire, India shall be raised from the position of a dependency to that of an equal partner in the Empire with Self-Governing Dominions.

1. Provincial Legislative Councils shall consist of 4/5 elected and 1/5 nominated members.

2. Members of the Council should be elected directly by the people on as broad a franchise as possible.

3. Adequate provision should be made for the representation of important minorities by election, and the Muslims should be represented through special electorates on the Provincial Legistive Councils in the following proportions :

Punjab 50%, United Provinces 30%, Bengal 40%, Bihar 25%, Central Provinces 15%, Madras 15%, Bombay 33 1/3%.

No Muslim shall participate in any of the other elections to the Imperial or Provincial Legislative Council save and except those by electorates representing special interests.

No bill nor any clause thereof nor a resolution introduced by a non-official member affecting one or the other community, which question is to be determined by the members of that community in the legislatures concerned, shall be proceeded with, if three-fourth's of the members of that community, in the particular council, Provincial or Imperial, oppose the bill or any clause thereof.

The head of every Provincial Government shall be a Governor who shall not ordinarily belong to the Indian Civil Service or any of the permanent services.

There shall be in every province an Executive Council which with the Governor shall constitute the Executive Government of the Province.

Members of Indian Civil Service shall not ordinarily be appointed to the Executive Council. Not less than half of these members shall consist of Indians to be elected by the elected members of the Council.

IMPERIAL LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

The strength of this Council shall be 150, and fours-fifths of these shall be elected. One-third of Indian elected members should be Muslims, elected by separate Muslim electorates.

The Imperial Legislative Council shall have no power to interfere with the Government of India's direction of the Military affairs and the foreign and political relations of India, including the declaration of war, the making of peace and entering into treaties.

Half of the members of the Executive shall be Indians who will be elected by the Council.

Members of the I.C.S. shall not ordinarily be appointed as members of the Executive Council.

The Council of the Secretary of State for India should be abolished.

The salary of the Secretary of State should be placed on the British estimates. He should, as far as possible, occupy the same position in relation to Government of India, as Secretary of State for the colonies does in relation to the Governments of self-governing dominions.

In any council or other body, which may be constituted for the settlement or Control of Imperial affairs, India shall be adequately represented in like manner with the Dominions and with equal rights. Indians should be placed on a footing of equality in respect of status and rights of citizenship with other subjects of His Majesty the King throughout the Empire.

The Military and Naval services of His Majesty, both in the commissioned and non-commissioned ranks, should be thrown open to Indians, and adequate provisions should be made for their selection, training and instruction in India.

Indians should be allowed to enlist as volunteers.

Executive Officers shall have no judicial powers. Judiciary in every province shall be placed under the highest court of that province.

NINETEEN MEMBERS' MEMORANDUM

Nineteen non-official members of the Imperial Legislative Council submitted the following Memorandum to the Viceroy:

1. In all the Executive Councils, Provincial and Imperial, half the number of members should be Indians. European element should be nominated from the ranks of men, trained and educated in the public life of England, so that India may have the benefit of a wider outlook and larger experience of the outer world.

2. All the Legislative Councils should have a substantial majority of elected representatives. Franchise should be widened. Muslims or Hindus where they are in a minority, should be given proper and adequate representation having regard to their numerical strength and position.

3. The Budget should be passed in the shape of money bills. Fiscal autonomy should be conceded to India.

4. The Council of the Secretary of State should be abolish ed. The Secretary of State for India should have the same relations with Government of India as Secretary of State for Colonies holds in relation to the colonies.

5. In any scheme of Imperial Federation, India should be given, through her chosen representatives, a place similar to that of Self-Governing Dominions.

6. The Provincial Governments should be made autonomous.

7. A full measure of local Self-Government be granted.

8. The right to carry arms should be granted to Indians on the same conditions as to Europeans.

9. Indians should be allowed to enlist as volunteers.

10. Commissions in the Army should be thrown open to Indians.

THIRTY-SECOND SESSION

This session was held at Calcutta in 1917 under the Presidentship of Mrs. Annie Besant.

Mrs. Besant came into Indian politics in 1914. She was an Irish woman but had made India the home of her choice and for herself an Indian soul. She was a great force. To her great intellect, and learning were linked an indomitable will, concentrated purpose fulness, undaunted courage, indefatigable zeal and a determination not to rest, until her work was done. Her matchless oratory was another very remarkable addition to her other qualities. She stirred the country by her spoken as well as written word. She had the advantage of a ready-made organization in the world-wide Theosophical Society. She soon left many of the old political workers behind, in the race and slightingly referred to them as 'men of yesterday'. She started a Home Rule League and under its auspices established organizations throughout the country, distributed vast quantities of propaganda literature.

Her speeches always infused life and spirit in the people. She was interned with Messrs. Arundale and Wadia in the middle of 1917. The Government of Madras forfeited about Rs. 20,000 in the way of securities demanded from her press. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru writes in his *Authobiography*, "I worked especially for Mrs. Besant's Home Rule League. Mrs. Besant began to play an ever-increasing part in the Indian Political scene. The atmosphere became electric and most of us young men felt



Mr. Sukhdev

LIFE WITHOUT
LIBERTY
IS A
LIVING DEATH



Mr. Jatinder Nath Dass



S. Bhagat Singh





exhilarated, and expected big things in the future. Mrs. Besant's internment added greatly to the excitement of the intelligentsia and vitalised the Home Rule movement all over the country. Her internment stirred even the oldest generation. including many of the moderate leaders. This resulted in my father and other moderate leaders joining the Home Rule League. Some months later most of the moderate members resigned from the League. My father remained in it and became the President of the Allahabad branch."

Some extracts from her Presidential address :

" For the first time in Congress history you have chosen as your president one who, when your choice was made, was under the heavy ban of Government displeasure and who lay interned as a person dangerous to public safety. While I was humiliated, you crowned me with honour, while I was slandered, you believed in my integrity and good faith, while I was crushed under the heels of bureaucratic power, you acclaimed me as your leader. While I was silenced and unable to defend myself, you defended and won for me my release. I was proud to serve in the lowliest fashion as a soldier but you have lifted me and placed me before the world as your chosen representative. My deeds must speak for me. My words are too poor.

" At last India sprang to her feet and cried in the words of one of her noblest sons : 'Freedon is my birthright and I shall have it.' The word Home Rule became her mantram. She claimed her place in this world which it richly deserves. Early in the war I ventured to say that the war could not end until England recognised that autocracy and bureaucracy must perish in India as well as in Europe. The Arya Samaj and the Theosophical Society have sought to lead the Indian people to a sense of the value of their own civilization, to pride in their past, creating self-respect in the present and self-confidence in the future. They destroyed the unhealthy inclination to imitate the West in all things."

" Another great force was that of Swami Vevekanand, alike in his passionate love and admiration for India, of his exposure of the evils resulting from materialism in the West.

" He said: " Our ancestors are great, we must recall that. We must learn the elements of our being, the blood that courses in our veins, we must have faith in that blood, and build an India, yet greater than she was before."

" Who can tell in the present keen strife if I shall be left

free to speak to you again. You have trusted me enough to elect me as your president, trust me enough to work with me as your president until I prove false to your trust.

"Self-Government is necessary to the self-respect and dignity of a people. Foreign Governments emasculate a nation, lower its character and lessen its capacity. A nation like, an individual, cannot develop its capacities to the utmost without liberty and this is recognised everywhere except in India. A nation is a spark of the Divine Fire, a fragment of the Divine Life outbreathed into the world, and gathering round itself a mass of individuals, men, women and children whom it binds together into one. Early in the War I ventured to say that the war could not end until England recognised that autocracy and bureaucrisy must perish in India as well in Europe. The good Lord Bishop of Calcutta lately declared that it would be a hypocrisy to pray for victory over autocracy in Europe and to maintain it in India.

"The superiority of the Punjab, on which Sir Michael O'Dwyer so vehemently insisted the other day is an artificial superiority created by the British system and policy.

The causes of the new spirit pervading in India are :

1. The awakening of Asia.
2. Discussions abroad on alien rule and Imperial reconstructions.
3. Loss of belief in the superiority of the white Races.
4. The awakening of the merchants.
5. The awakening of the women to claim their ancient position.
6. The awakening of the masses.

"India requires a contented, strong, self-dependent and armed India able to hold her own. The democratic movemnt in Japan, China and Russia has sympathetically affected India and it is idle to pretend that it will cease to affect her. The reconstruction of the Empire was on the anvil. What was to be India's place therein? Was India to remain a dependency? India saw her soldiers fighting for freedom in Flanders, France, in Gallipoli, in Asia Minor in China and in Africa. Was she to have no freedom for which she fought?

"To see India free, to see her hold up her head among the nations, to see her sons and daughters respected everywhere

to see her worthy of her mighty past, engaged in building a yet mightier future. Is not this worth working for, worth suffering for, worth living and worth dying for? Is there any other land which evokes such love for her spirituality, such admiration for her literature, such homage for her valour, as this glorious mother of nations from whose womb went forth the races that now in Europe and America are leading the world? India now stands on this: her resurrection is coming, the immortal, the glorious, the ever-young. India shall soon be seen proud and self-reliant, strong and free, the radiant splendour of Asia, as the light and the benediction of the world."

Her address was very outspoken and was very fluently delivered.

The first important event of the year was that Mr. Montague made a statement is the House of Commons on August 20, 1917, in which he said:

"The policy of His Majesty's Government with which the Government of India are in complete accord is that of increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration, and the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realization of responsible Government in India as an integral part of the British Empire. They have decided that substantial steps should be taken as soon as possible and that it is of the highest importance, as a preliminary, to consider what these steps should be that there should be a free and informal exchange of opinion between those in authority at home and in India."

The second event of importance was Mr. Montague's visit to India. He was the first Secretary of State for India to do so. The visit followed as a result of his momentous statement in the House of Commons which was destined to change the whole attitude of Great Britian towards India and to lead on directly to self-Government.

The Calcutta Congress, although largely dominated by the extremists, passed a resolution that this Congress speaking on behalf of the united people of India begs respectfully to convey to His Majesty the King-Emperor their deep loyalty and profound attachment to the Throne, the unswerving allegiance to the British connection and their firm resolve to stand by the Empire at all hazards and cost.

The Calcutta session was attended by 4,967 delegates and about 5,000 visitors.

Resolutions:

1. India's loyalty for throne.

2. Welcome to Mr. Montague.

3. Demand for release of Messrs. Mohammad Ali and Shaukat Ali.

4. Military training for Indians.

5. Satisfaction at the removal of the racial bar against admission of Indians to the commissioned ranks of the Army and the appointment of nine Indians to such ranks. Expressed the hope for much larger proportion at an early date.

6. Demand for complete abolition of the system of indentured labour.

7. Condemnation of the Rowlatt Committee because its object was to introduce fresh legislation arming the executive with additional powers to restrict the liberties of people.

The main resolution was regarding Self-Government and it is as under:

"This Congress expresses its grateful satisfaction over the pronouncement made by His Majesty's Secretary of State for India on behalf of the Imperial Government, that its object is the establishment of Responsible self-Government for India.

"This Congress strongly urges the necessity for the immediate enactment of a Parliamentary statute providing for the establishment of Responsible Government in India, the full measure to be attained within a time limit to be fixed in the statute itself at an early date.

"This Congress is emphatically of opinion that the Congress-League scheme of Reforms ought to be immediately introduced by the Statute as the first step towards progress."

SPECIAL SESSION

After the release of the Reforms Report on July 12, 1918, it was found that the Indian political opinion was divided into two sharply defined parties. On the day after its publication, at a conference of the right wing of Congress leaders in Calcutta, presided over by Surender Nath Bannerji, a resolution was passed, that the conference while reserving its judgement on details, welcomed the Reform Scheme as accomplishing a real and definite stage in the progressive realization of Responsible Government. But on July 14th these proposals were condemned by the left

wing nationalists at the Bengal Provincial Conference presided over by Bepin Chandra Pal. The cleavage of opinion was real. The left wing was trying its level best to bring the moderate leaders to the special Congress which was to be held at Bombay to consider the Reforms report. But the moderates, as Sir Dinshaw Wacha wrote, felt it necessary to hold an All-India Conference of the moderate party, owing to the great danger of the Reform scheme being wrecked by the extremists. The Special Congress at Bombay was presided over by Syed Hasan Imam. Vithalbhai Patel was the Chairman of the Reception Committee. Some moderate leaders also attended the session. The resolution which indirectly had reference to the proposed reforms was:

"That this Congress reaffirms the principles of reform contained in the resolutions relating to self-Government adopted by the Indian National Congress and the All India Muslim League held at Lucknow in December, 1916 and at Calcutta in December, 1917 and declared that nothing less than Self-Government, within the empire, can satisfy the Indian Nation by enabling it to take its rightful place as a free and self-governing nation, in the British Commonwealth and strengthen the connection between great Britain and India.

"That this Congress declares that the people of India are fit for responsible Government and repudiates the assumption to the contrary contained in the report on Indian Constitutional Reforms."

The other resolution contained more comprehensive suggestions. "The Government of India shall have undivided administrative authority in matters directly concerning peace, tranquillity, and defence of the country, subject to the following:

(*a*) That the statute to be passed by the Parliament should include the Declaration of the Rights of the people of India as British citizens. That all subjects of His Majesty and all the subjects naturalised or resident in India, are equal before the law, and there shall be no penal or administrative law in this country whether substantive or proceedural of a discriminative character.

(*b*) That no Indian subject of His Majesty shall be liable to suffer in liberty, life, property, or in respect of free speech, or writing, or the right of association, except under sentence by an ordinary court of justice.

(*e*) That the press shall be free and that no licence or security shall be demanded on the registration of a press or a newspaper.

(*d*) That corporal punishment shall not be inflicted on any Indian subject of His Majesty save under conditions applying equally to all other British subjects."

After setting forward these fundamental rights another resolution was passed concerning the reform proposals as they stood in the Montague-Chelmsford Reform.

"That the Congress appreciates the earnest attempt on the part of the Right Hon'ble the Secretary of State and His Excellency the Viceroy to inaugurate a system of Responsible Government in India, but while it recognises that some of the proposals constitute an advance on the present conditions, in some directions it is of opinion that the proposals as a whole are disappointing, and unsatisfactory, and suggests the following modifications as absolutely necessary, to constitute a substantial step towards Responsible Government. That this Congress entirely disagrees with the formula contained in the said report that the Provinces are the domain in which earlier steps should be taken towards the progressive realization of Responsible Government, and that the authority of the Government of India in essential matters must remain indisputable, pending experience of the effect of changes proposed to be introduced in the Provinces, and the Congress is of opinion that simultaneous advance is indispensable both in the Provinces, and the Government of India."

The constitutional proposals submitted by the Congress had practically no effect on the Viceroy or the Secretary of State. No modifications were made in the scheme. They re-affirmed the Muslim representation in the legislatures. They also proposed drastic alterations in the control exercised by the British Parliament through the Secretary of State. Fiscal autonomy was demanded as an inherent right of the Indian people, and the Central Legislative Council of State was to be abolished, as also the Indian Council in London. The whole idea underlying the proposals was to make the new constitution as democratic as possible.

MODERATES' CONFERENCE

The large element of the Congress which had refused to attend the Bombay session held a conference of their own in the same city under the presidentship of Surender Nath Bannerji and passed a resolution cordially welcoming the reform proposals of the Secretary of State and the Viceroy as constituting a distinct advance on the present conditions, both as regards the Government of India, and the provincial Governments, and also a real and

substantial step towards the progressive realization of Responsible Government in the Provinces, in due fulfilment of the terms of the announcement of August 20, 1917. They suggested some minor changes to the proposals and appointed a Committee to select a deputation to proceed to England in order to urge on the British statesmen and the British public the wisdom and necessity of supporting the Montague-Chelmsford Reform Scheme.

THIRTY-THIRD SESSION

This session was held in 1918 in Delhi. Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya presided. He said:

"The importance of this session of the Congress does not need to be emphasised We meet today in this ancient capital of the Indian Empire, hoary with all its historic traditions and associations. It irresistably brings to our minds a crowd of thoughts, happy, and the reverse, of the glories, and vicissitudes which our ancient land has undergone.

"The hand of Providence is clearly discernible both in the development of this war, and its termination. The world, particularly the European world needed a correction and a change. It had been too much given up to materialism and had been too much estranged from spiritual consideration.

"India occupies at present an anamolous and unhappy position. The people of India are the inheritors of great and ancient civilization. About a hundred and fifty years ago the whole of India was under the rule of Indians.

"The declaration made by the Secretary of State on August 20, 1917 is a momentous utterance but it is unnecessarily cautious and cold. We did not like the qualifying conditions with which it is weighed.

"Standing in this ancient capital of India both of the Hindu and Mohammedan periods, it fills me, my countrymen with inexpressible sorrow and shame to think that we the descendants of Hindus who ruled for 4,000 years over this extensive empire and the descendants of Mussalmans who ruled here for several hundred years should have so far fallen from our ancient state that we should have to argue our capacity for even a limited measure of autonomy and Self-Rule. I hope that the insult of such an assumption will no longer be added to the injury that is being done to us by our being kept out of our birthright to self-Government, and that the principle of self-determination will be extended to India.

"The Lord Bishop of Calcutta said: 'If we turn away from application of our principles to India it is but hypocrisy to come before God with the plea that our cause is the cause of liberty.'

"Since India passed directly under the British Crown we have owed allegiance to the King, we stand unshaken in that allegiance. We still desire to remain subjects of the British Empire.

"The great Congress representing the people of all classes and creeds, Hindus, Mussalmans, Parsees and Christians, representing all interests, landholders and tenants, merchants and businessmen, educationists, publicists and representatives of other sections of the people, is assembled here today to determine and declare what in its opinion should be the measure of reform which should be introduced into the country. The representatives of the people must have an effective voice in determining the future steps of progress towards complete responsible Government. This will produce contentment and gratitude among the people of India and strengthen their attachment to the British Empire.

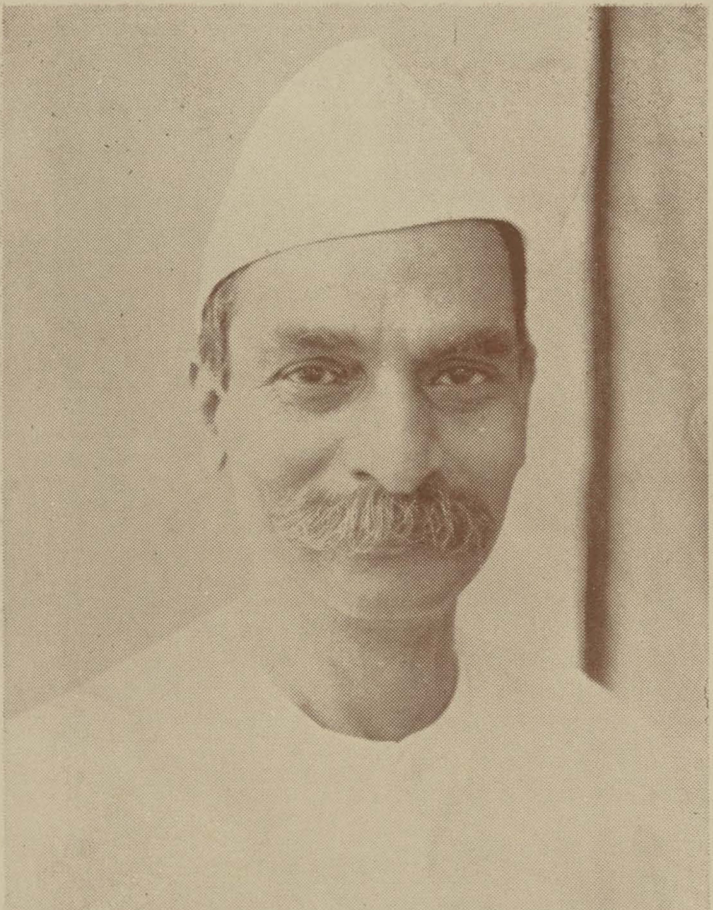
"No nation can be perfectly well-governed unless it governs itself. No arguments are, therefore, needed to justify our request that we should be allowed to govern ourselves. The justice of our case is overwhelmingly strong.

"Our cause is just, the opportunity for pressing it is favourable. There is a great need of sending a strong deputation to England so that our cause may not suffer for want of advocacy.

"I ask you to determine that, hereafter you will resent, and resent most strongly, any effort to treat you as an inferior people. I ask you to determine that henceforward you will claim, and claim with all the strength at your command, that in your country you shall have opportunities to grow as freely as Englishmen grow in the United Kingdom.

"You should go about inculcating principles of liberty, equality and fraternity among the people and you will make every brother, however humble or lowly placed he may be, to feel that the ray Divine is as much in him as in any other man however highly placed.'

Immediately after the Calcutta Congress of 1917, things began to move swiftly. The Montague-Chelmsford report was published on July 12, 1918, and aroused fierce controversy in India.



Rajendra Prasad
President Constituent Assembly

It at once showed that there were fundamental differences between the two schools of thought, and the issue was further complicated by the recommendations of the Rowlatt Commission which were vehemently resented.

The Delhi Session was a marked success from many points of view ; out of 6,000 delegates 1,000 were peasants, tillers of soil, and had come all the way at a great personal sacrifice to attend the Congress.

Proceedings were conducted with high dignity, tolerance and decorum.

The fact that the Indian cultivators were now beginning to take an active part in the proceedings of the Congress and were able to speak in their own tongue, instead of English, marked a definite turning-point in the history of the Congress. It showed very clearly, indeed, that the earlier days when English alone was spoken and none but the English educated attended were now over. It was beginning to be a Congress of the masses, instead of continuing to be that of the classes. The whole tone of the resolutions had altered. It had become much more incisive.

It resolved that the recommendations of the Rowlatt Committee, if given effect to, will interfere with the fundamental rights of the Indian people. The insistence on certain fundamental rights being observed at all costs came up again and again not only in Congress resolutions but also in the form of a constitution for New India which the Congress proposed. One further factor which made the Delhi Session eventful as a new departure in the Congress proceedings was its deep interest in the world at large, outside India itself.

President Wilson's theory of self-determination had aroused universal interest in India. Leaders began to realize that in order to wrest power from the British Government they must make India a great world issue and must not be content with regarding what happened merely as a domestic concern between India and Great Britain. For the first time, therefore, in its long history the Congress embarked upon a scheme which was intended to attract the attention of the world outside, on behalf of Indian Freedom. Since this was an entirely new departure on the part of the Congress the resolution on self-determination is quoted here in full :

"In view of the pronouncements of President Wilson and Mr. Lloyd George and other statesmen that to ensure the future peace of the world, the principle of self-determination, should

be applied to all progressive nations. The Congress claims the recognition of India by the British Parliament and by the peace conference as one of the progressive nations to whom the principle of self-determination should be aplied."

"As a practical application of the principle in India the first step should be the removal of all hindrance to free discussion and therefore the immediate repeal of all laws, regulations and ordinances restricting the free discussion of political questions, and further the abolition of the laws, regulations and ordinances, which confer on the executive the power to arrest, detain, intern, extern or imprison any British subiect in India outside the process of ordinary civil or criminal law and the assimilation of the law of sedition to that of England, and finally the passing of an Act of Parliament which will establish at an early date complete Responsible Government in India. When complete responsible government shall be thus established the final authority in all internal affairs shall be the supreme legislative Assembly as voicing the will of Indian Nation. The Congress urges that in justice to India it should be represented by an elected representative or representatives to the same extent as the self-governing Domimon at any conference that may be held to deliberate on or settle the terms of peace or reconstruction. In view of the shortness of time and in anticipation of this request being acceded to by His Majesty's Government this Congress elects as its representatives, Tilak, Gandhi, and Hassan Imam."

The Congress made a strong demand for the fulfilment of the principle of self-determination to other nations. An appeal was formally placed before the Foreign Relations Committee of the United States' senate by Malaviya representing the people of India. His submission to the committee was that if the covenant of the League of Nations was passed, as it stood, it will destroy the hopes of the subject countries all over the world. He said the hearts of 35 million people in India, the millions in Ireland, and the millions in Egypt, will be broken, if it is passed in its present form and we come here with a specific request that this distinguished Committee should so amend the League of Nations' covenant as to make it obligatory on every signatory to the covenant and to that Treaty to provide democratic institutions for the people who live under the Government of any signatory. He afterwards read before the foreign Relations Committee the resolution of the Delhi Congress on the Peace Conference.

Tilak wrote to Mr. Clemenceau, President of the Peace

Conference, as under :

" It is unnecessary for me to dwell upon the importance of solving the Indian question for the purpose of ensuring the future peace of the world and the progress of the people of India. India is self-contained, harbours no designs upon the integrity of other states, and has no ambition outside India. With her vast area, enormous resources, and prodigious population, she may well aspire to be a leading power in Asia, if not in the world. She could, therefore, be a powerful steward of the League of Nations in the East for maintaining the peace of the world, and stability of the British Empire against all aggressions and disturber of peace whether in Asia or elsewhere."

Shriyut K. Subramanium, K. C. I. E., Doctor of Laws, Retired Judge, and frequently acting Chief Justice of the High Court of Madras, Hon. President of the Home Rule League in India, addressed a letter to Mr. Wilson, President, United States of America in 1917. A few extracts are being quoted here :

" The Indian National Congress and the All-Indian Muslim League are the only two bodies in India to-day, which truly represent the political ideals of our nation of more than three hundred millions of people, because these are the only bodies created by the people themselves. Both these bodies have agreed upon identical resolutions asking the King to issue a proclamation, announcing that it is the aim and intention of British policy, to confer self-Government on India at an early date and lift India from the position of a Dependency to that of an equal partner in the Empire with self-governing Dominions.

" Though many months have elapsed, Great Britain has not yet made any promise to grant our country's plea. At present we are a subject nation held in chains, forbidden by our alien rulers to express publicly our desire, for the ideals presented in your war message, the liberation of peoples, the rights of nations, great and small, and the privilege of men everywhere to choose their ways of life and of obedience. The world must be made safer for Democracy. Its peace must be planted upon the tested foundations of political liberty.

" India has contributed freely and generously, both blood and treasure, in France, in Gallipoli, in Mesopotamia and elsewhere. Mr. Chamberlain, the Secretary of State for India said : " There are Indian troops in France to this day ; their gallantry, endurance, patience and perseverance were shown under conditions new and strange to them." Field-Marshal Lord Foch said : 'I have been

much impressed by the initiative and resources displayed by the Indian Troops.'

"Permit me to say that you and other leaders have been kept in ignorance of the full measure of misrule and oppression in India. Officials of an alien nation, speaking a foreign tongue, force their will upon us. They grant themselves exorbitant salaries and large allowances, they refuse us education, they say us of our wealth, they impose crushing taxes without our consent, they cast thousands of our people into prisons for uttering patriotic sentiments—prisons so filthy that often the inmates die of loathsome diseases.

"A recent instance of misrule is the imprisonment of Mrs. Besant, that noble Irish woman, who has done so much for India. As set forth on the accompanying statement, signed by eminent legislators, editors, educators and pleaders, she had done nothing except carry on a law-abiding and constitutional propaganda for Reforms; the climax being her internment without charges and without trial, shortly after printing and circulating your war message."

"Honoured Sir, the aching heart of India cries out to you whom we believe to be an instrument of God in the reconstruction of the world."

He renounced his title and returned the insignia as a protest against the insulting behaviour of the Secretary of State and the Government of India, because of his having written the above-quoted letter.

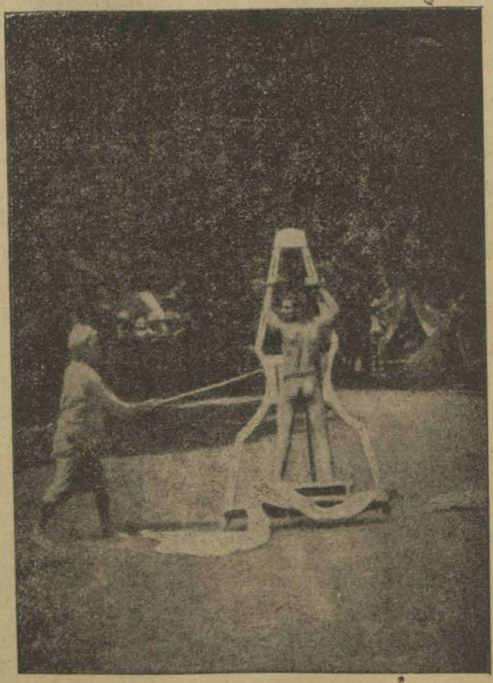
Questions were put in the House of Commons and Mr. Montague replied: "The impropriety of this disgraceful letter is all the more inexcusable owing to the position of the writer. The assertions in the letter are too wild and baseless to require or receive notice from any responsible authority."

The Viceroy conveyed his displeasure at Mr. S ubramaniam's conduct in the most unmistakable manner, exhibiting much temper, and importing unnecessary warmth, into the question. He was very harshly treated. The Viceroy administered an uncalled for rebuke in the presence of and with the express approval of the Secretary of State and acting on his behalf also. To this Mr. Subramaniam said: "I court with eagerness and sincerity any punishment that may be meted out to me. I have done my duty to my motherland. My cause is the cause of the whole country, and in furtherance of that cause all that is mine, my name, my liberty and my everything else must be sacrificed and willingly

sacrificed. Internment or externment, deportation and the like have no terror for me and at this time of my life, with no earthly expectation to realize, I feel I can have no more glorious fate to meet in pursuance of gaining Home Rule for India than to become an object of official tyranny.

"I shall be most happy to renounce this Knight Companionship and return at once the insignia thereof, if the retention of the title or insignia should in anyway hinder the exercise of my right of citizenship to complain of wrong and seek redress against the consequences of mal-administration. I would more readily lose my pension than deprive myself by reason of my continuing to draw it, of any right of my citizenship."

He renounced both his titles as a protest against the unbecoming and undignified language employed by the Secretary of State for India because he considered it to be impossile for him, with any self-respect to continue as a title-holder after his having been treated so shabbily by the Viceroy and the Secretary of State.



Flogging under Martial Law

CHAPTER XIII

The Satyagraha Movement

WE reproduce below some extracts from Mahatmaji's *Experiments with Truth* regarding the Satyagraha movement started by Mahatma Gandhi in connection with Rowlatt Act :

"I had hardly begun to feel my way towards recovery when I happened casually to read in the papers the Rowlatt Committee's report which had just been published. Its recommendations startled me. Shankerlal Banker and Umar Sobhani approached me with the suggestion that I should take some prompt action in this matter. In about a month I went to Ahmedabad. I mentioned my apprehensions to Vallabhbhai who used to come to see me almost daily. 'Something must be done,' said I to him. 'But what can we do in the circumstances?' he asked in reply, I answered: 'If even a handful of men can be found to sign the pledge of resistance, if the proposed measure is passed into law, in defiance of it, we ought to offer satyagraha at once. If I were not laid up like this I should give battle against it all alone and expect others to follow suit. But in my present helpless condition I feel myself to be altogether unequal to the task.' As a result of this talk it was decided to call a small meeting of such persons as were in touch with me. The recommendations of the Rowlatt Committee seemed to be altogether unwarranted by the evidence published in the report, and were, I feel, such that no self-respecting people could submit to them. The proposed conference was at last held at the Ashram. So far as I remember among those who attended were Vallabhbhai, Shrimati Sarojini Naidu, Sjt Shankerlal Banker and Shrimati Anusuya Ben. The Satyagraha pledge was drafted at this meeting and as far as I can recollect, was signed by all present. A separate body called the Satyagraha Sabha, was established at my instance. I became the

President of the Sabha. It seemed clear to me that the Sabha was not likely to live long. I could see that already that my emphasis on Truth and Ahimsa had begun to be disliked by some of its members. Nevertheless in its early stages our new activity went on at full blast, and the movement gathered head rapidly and the Government grew more and more determined to give effect to its recommendations, and the Rowlatt Bill was published. Shastriji delivered an impassioned speech in the Imperial Legislative Council in which he uttered a solemn note of warning to the Government. The Viceroy seemed to be listening spell-bound riveted on Shastriji as the latter poured forth the hot stream of his eloquence. For the moment it seemed to me as if the Viceroy could not but be deeply moved by it. It was so true and full of feeling, but this warning was entirely lost upon the Government.

"I earnestly pleaded with the Viceroy. I clearly told him that the Government's action left me no other course except to resort to Satyagraha. But it was all in vain. I felt myself at a loss to discover how to offer Civil Disobedience against the Rowlatt Bill if it was finally passed into law. The Rowlatt Bill had been published as an Act. I was in the twilight condition beetween sleep and conciousness, when suddenly the idea broke upon me. I was as if in a dream which was:

"We should call upon the country to observe a general Hartal. Satyagraha is a process of self-purification, and ours is a sacred fight, and it seems to me to be in the fitness of things, that it should be conmenced with an act of self-purification. Let all the people of India therefore suspend their business on that day, and observe the day as one of fasting, and prayer. I drafted a brief appeal. The date of Hartal was first fixed on 30th March, 1919, but was subsequently changed to 6th April.

" The whole of India from one end to the other, towns, as well as villages, observed a complete Hartal on that day. It was a most wonderful spectacle. Delhi had observed Hartal on the 30th March. The word of Swami Shradhanandji and Hakim Ajmal Khan Sahib was law, and Hindus and Mussalmans seemed united like one. Swami Shradhanandji was invited to deliver a speech in the Juma Masjid which he did. All this was more than authorities could bear. The police opened fire there, causing a number of casualties and the reign of repression commenced in Delhi. Swami Shradhanand urgently sun.moned me to Delhi. I wired back, saying I would start for Delhi

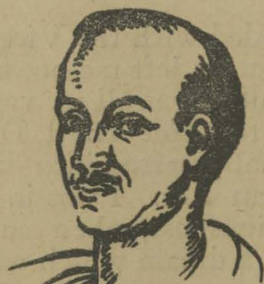


Mr. Gopi Nath Saha

They kissed the Hangman's Rope so that India should live



Mr. Dinesh Gupta



Surya Sen



Mr. Salyen Basu



Mr. Hemu Kalyani

immediately after the 6th of April celebrations were over in Bombay. From Amritsar Dr. Satyapal and Dr. Kitchlew had sent me a pressing invitation to visit Amritsar after Delhi. The Hartal in Bombay was a complete success. Full preparations had been made for starting Civil Disobedience. I suggested people might prepare salt from sea water in disregard of salt laws, or print and sell proscribed literature. This was the easiest way of offering Civil Disobedience. Two of my books were proscribed. A sufficient number of them were therefore printed and it was arranged to sell them at the end of the monster meeting to be held that evening. All the copies were soon sold out. The Government did not think this act to constitute an offence under the law. The news caused general disappointment. The next morning another meeting was held for the administration of the pledges with regard to Swadeshi and Hindu-Muslim unity. Only a handful of persons came. I have noticed this characteristic difference in the popular attitude, partiality for exciting work and dislike for quiet constructive efforts. On the night of 7th April I started for Delhi and Amritsar. On reaching Muttra, on the 8th, I heard rumours about my probable arrest. Before the train had reached Palwal station I was served with a written order to the effect that I was prohibited from entering the boundary of the Punjab, as my presence there was likely to result in a disturbance of peace. I was asked by the Police to get down from the train. I refused to do so, saying I wanted to go to the Punjab in response to a pressing invitation, not to foment unrest but allay it. I am therefore sorry that it is not possible for me to comply with the order.

" At Palwal I was taken out of the train, and put under police custody. Inspector Bowring requested me to return to Bombay of my own accord and not to cross the frontier of the Punjab. I replied that I could not possibly comply with the order, and that I was not prepared of my own accord to go back. When we had reached Bombay the police officer-in-charge told me : ' You are now free.' A friend told me that the news of my arrest had incensed the people, and roused them to a pitch of new frenzy. An outbreak was apprehended every minute near Pydhuni. The magistrate and the police had already arrived there. I went to the place. On seeing me the people went mad with joy. A procession was started. We sighted a body of mounted police. The procession found itself confronted by the police, who had arrived there to prevent it from proceeding further in the direction of the Fort. The ranks of the people were soon broken, some got trampled under foot

others were badly mauled and crushed. The whole thing presented a most dreadful spectacle. The horsemen and the people were mixed together in mad confusion.

"I proceeded to Ahmedabad where the mill hands had gone mad over the rumoured arrest of Shrimati Anusuya Ben. They had struck work, and committed acts of violence, and a sergeant had been done to death, and an attempt had been made to pull up the rails. The people were terror-stricken. I declared a penitential fast of three days for myself. I made up my mind to suspend Satyagraha so long as people had not learned the lesson of peace. I was firmly of opinion that those who wanted to lead the people to Satyagraha ought to be able to keep the people within the limited non-violence expected of them.

"I had called on the people to launch upon Civil Disobedience before they had thus qualified themselves for it, and this mistake seemed to me of Himalayan magnitude. I realise that before a people could be fit for offering Civil Disobedience they should thoroughly understand its deep implications. That being so, before re-starting Civil Disobedience on a mass scale, it would be necessary to create a band of well-tried, pure-hearted, volunteers who thoroughly understood the strict conditions of Satyagraha. They could explain that to the people and by sleepless vigilance keep them on the right path."

Side by side with the publication of Montague-Chelmsford report was published the Rowlatt Commission report. The report contained a review of the revolutionary conspiracies in India, the association of the Bengal seditionists with German plots, the abortive efforts to ship arms to conspirators, and the plans for rising which were eventually defeated. The recommendations were a denial to the individual of the right to be tried openly by his peers which was the very centre of the whole judicial system.

ROWLATT ACT

Very meritorious services were rendered by Indians during the war. No effort was spared and no help was grudged. Men and money and munitions, India supplied generously and even extravagantly. The Premier, the Secretary of State for India, the Viceroy, the British Press and the Public all paid a tribute to the brilliant services rendered by Indians when the honour of Great Britain was at stake. When everything ended well, and the glory and prestige of the British had enhanced considerably, the Government of India presented to India in 1919, the Rowlatt Act, as a

reward for its distinguished record during the War. These met with universal opposition throughout India. The Act invested the Government with emergency powers to enable it to deal with anarchical and revolutionary movements. The fact that a person is concerned in any movement of either kind is in the first instance to be determined behind his back, and later on when his case is referred to an investgating authority, he is to be given an opportunity to appear at some stage, (not all the stages) of the proceedings which are to be held in camera. The investigating authority shall not be bound by ordinary laws. The suspected person is not to be allowed to be represented hy a counsel. He may not be told the name of his accused, not even all the facts on which his accusation is based, and is not entitled as a matter of right to examine any witness or produce any document. The sole judge of innocence or guilt of a person was to be the executive authority, and all safeguards imposed by law on them have been removed. People resented such an encroachment on their rights and this slogan was very much popular in the Punjab "*NA VAKIL, NA APPEAL, NA DALIL*," *i.e.*, no pleader, no appeal and no argument. The Act was an ugly blot on the statute book. The very existence of this measure was a stain on our self-respect and our national honour.

Some members of the Imperial Council made a vigorous protest against the Bill. Mr. Sastri made a very reasoned and forceful speech, and very eloquently and passionately urged the Government to withdraw such an obnoxious measure. As usual no heed was paid to such protests. To mark their disapprobation and resentment some members resigned their seats on the Council.

Mahatma Gandhi came to the forefront. He said : "A Government be it ever so powerful and autocratic, is bound to yield to unanimous public opinion. It is a bad outlook for us, if truth and justice have to surrender to mere physical force whether it is wielded by an individual or a Government."

He further said "The Rowlatt Bills were the unmistakable symptom of the deep-seated disease in the Governing Body,"—a disease which soon after broke out in all its virulence and naked ugliness.

To fight this disease Mahatma Gandhi started the great Satyagraha movement. A new force was introduced into our politics—a force with the most tremendous potentialities. Indian masses were suddenly awakened and the message of Satyagraha entered the humblest home. The essentials of this doctrine are

truth, fearlessness, and non-violence. Laws in India are passed against the will of the people, and so it is the right of every man to refuse to obey any law which goes against his conscience, and which he cannot with due regard to truth submit to and to suffer consequences for such disobedience. This process of nullifying law which is repugnant to one's conscience is called Passive Resistance. Mahatmaji's Satyagraha is this and much more.

Mahatma Gandhi had, after his bold stand on behalf of the Indians in South Africa, acquired a prestige of his own. He commanded in India all the traditional reverence which Indians have for a religious leader of acknowledged asceticism. After his return from South Africa he settled down in India and actively carried on several non-violent campaigns for the redress of wrongs, inflicted on labourers, peasants, and industrial workers. This had further strengthened the faith and belief of his country in his capacity to successfully pursue this movement of Satyagraha against the Rowlatt Act.

He announced on 24th February that he would lead a Passive Resistance or Satyagraha movement if the Bills were passed. This announcement was regarded as being of the utmost gravity by the Government and the politicians of India. Mrs. Besant struck a discordant note and said that such a movement would result in the release of such forces whose potentialities for evil were quite incalculable.

On 1st March he published a pledge which is as follows:

"Being conscientiously of opinion that the Bills known as the Indian Criminal Law Amendment Bill No. 1 of 1919 and the Criminal Law Emergency Powers Bill No. 2 of 1919 are unjust and subsersive of the principles of liberty and justice and destruction of the elementary rights of an individual, on which the safety of India, as a whole, and the state itself is based, we solemnly affirm that in the event of these bills becoming law and until they are withdrawn, we shall refuse civilly to obey these laws and such other laws as the Committee hereafter to be appointed may think fit, and we further affirm that in the struggle we will follow truth, and refrain from violence to life, person, or property." Mahatma Gandhi says: "Satyagraha is my Kalpadruma, Jame-Jam, the Universal Provider. Satyagraha is search for truth and truth is God. Ahimsa or non-violence is the light that reveals that Truth to me. Swaraja for me is a part of that Truth. Satyagraha never fails. One perfect Satyagrahi is enough to vindicate Truth. Let us all strive to be perfect Satyagrahis. The striving does not

require any quality unattainable by the lowliest among us. For Satyagraha is an attribute of the spirit within. It is latent in every one of us. Like Swaraj it is our birthright. Let us know it."

There was a good response from all parts of India. Gandhiji inaugurated the movement with a fast and called for a general Hartal on 30th March which was later changed to 6th April, 1919. This was to be a day of penance and prayer. The country took to the new idea readily, and whole-heartedly. Gandhiji commanded great respect both in the Congress and the country and there was complete and peaceful Hartal in even the farthest corners of India. At Delhi hartal was observed on 30th March. A procession was taken out under the leadership of Swami Shradhanand who had fully and zealously associated himself with the movement. Some European soldiers threatened firing. Swamiji bared his chest and invited the soldiers to shoot him outright. This strengthened the minds of the people. It infused new life and fresh vigour in them to carry on their procession and pay no heed to such threats. It also over-awed the soldiers, and they were discreet enough to keep their zeal under control. At Delhi Railway Station there was some distrubance ending in a firing which caused 5 deaths and a score or so of casualties.

Dr. Satyapal writes about Agitation at Amritsar.

Amritsar could easily be ranked as the first and foremost city in India to have successfully observed Hartals on 30th March and 6th April. Later it had to pay a very heavy price for its activities, but the response was genuine and generous, grand and magnificent. Public meetings were held almost daily. Dr. Kitchlew and I addressed them. Dr. Kitchlew had a very big share in the success of this movement. To him belongs the credit of getting his co-religionists associated fully and whole-heartedly with the movement. He is a very bold and brave patriot, and he spoke with full force against Rowlatt Acts and thus charged the people of Amritsar with electric energy. He commands respect among all communities and so it is mainly due to him that Amritsar gave a very good account of itself. Mahashe Rattan Chand is a genius in organizational work. To him rightly belongs the credit of organizing the whole town in a marvellous manner. I pay a full-throated compliment to him and Chowdhri Bugga Mal for the splendid work they did in arousing the masses of Amritsar.

" Day in and day out, they worked and toiled. They created a stir. They did very excellent work ,in making this movement

a success. They had to pay a very heavy penalty for their manifold patriotic activities. They were sentenced to death and they were saved from the executioner's noose after having been in a state of suspense for about 15 months.

"On 29th March, I think, I was served with an order prohibiting me from making any speech, etc. The situation was growing tense. The agitation was gaining in volume and strength beyond our expectations and even our imagination. The city rose almost to a man to offer a whole hearted response to the appeal of Mahatmaji. We decided to invite Mahatmaji to Amritsar to study the situation for himself and to advise us all as to how to make the best use of this surging tide of public enthusiasm. Sir Michael O'Dwyer, a sunburnt and a hard boiled bureaucrat, was bent on exasperating the people. He called us grass-hoppers. He restricted our liberties and to crown his mischievous acts he prohibited Mahatmaji's entry into our province. This irritated our people beyond measure and increased the existing bitterness and resentment people had already in their minds. The hartal on 6th April was complete, as complete as ever can be. Even the poorest labourer suspended his work and slept with an empty stomach as he could not earn his wages. All shops, big and small, all business houses, restaurants, hotels, etc. were closed. Such a complete suspension of business enraged the Government officials and they very much fretted and frowned, that in spite of their vigorous efforts, persuasions and threats, they were unable to get even one shop opened. And above all, they were alarmed at the most cordial relations that existed between Hindus and Mohammedans. Such a close association of all communities was nothing short of a calamity for the officials, whose only safety lies in keeping us divided and disintegrated.

The day passed off quietly. Nothing untoward happened, and it is very creditable for the people that they remained peaceful and non-violent, sober and reasonable even in face of grave provocation. O'Dwyer and, under his instructions the local officials, were goading the people to desperation, but they behaved admirably and kept themselves under a control well worthy of emulation.

On 9th April Ram Naumi was celebrated with great pomp and grandeur. This festival was being observed in Amritsar for a long time and had always the fullest support of Hindus, but this year there was a revolution in the ideas of the people and though it was purely a Hindu festival, Mohammadens joined hands with Hindus to make it a national festival. What a fraternisation, what a blending of the two communities, what a fusion of the till yes-

terday warring elements! There was a complete transformation of the whole city. As if by magic wand the whole situation had been changed almost beyond recognition. Hindus and Mohammedans had set up drinking booths where sherbet and milk, etc., were served to all regardless of religion and social status. Men of all denominations vied with each other in drinking out of cups offered by the other community. It was indeed a sight worthy of gods. It cheered one and all. It inspired us with fresh life. It gladdened us beyond measure. It had been customary for the processionists to stop at the place where the District Magistrate and other high officials were watching the procession and the band used to play 'God save the King'. This was abolished altogether. The Mohammadens had put up their own show as an integral part of this procession. All these things enraged the authorities. They were quite at their wits' end in finding a way out of the difficulty and as is their wont instead of taking a sober and sympathetic view of the case they resorted to the only weapons which are their mainstay, viz., repression, persecution and tyranny.

"On 10th April I received a note from the District Magistrate asking me to see him at his residence at 10 a.m. I went to Dr. Kitchlew to consult him about it. He too had received a similar letter. I reached there at 10 a.m. Dr. Kitchlew had not arrived till then. A few minutes later he too came and we both were admitted to the drawing room of the Deputy Commissioner. The only other occupant was the Deputy Commissioner but as soon as we entered, the side doors opened and in came rushing a score of Europeans, officials and non-officials. There was not a single Indian among them. The Deputy Commissioner placed deportation orders in our hands and we were informed that we were under arrest, and that we would be taken to Dharamsala.

At Dharamsala we were kept under a strict surveillance. Letters censored, interviews restricted, personal freedom reduced to a minimum, we were passing our days almost entirely ignorant of what was happening, or what had happened at Amritsar or Lahore or other places in or outside the province. Thanks to the repressive policy of the autocrat, and bureaucrat O'Dwyer, newspapers were suppressed and a reign of terror was established in the Punjab in general and Lahore, Amritsar, Gujranwala and Sheikhupura in particular. The only indications of things taking a serious turn, were the increase in the rigidity and severity of the restrictions imposed on us. To start with we had some freedom but later on it was curtailed to the minimum. It was more or less like a prison life. A month had hardly passed when we were both

arrested. We both were handcuffed and taken to Lahore. We were deposited in the Central Jail, Lahore and it was all a novel and strange experience. In Punjab Jails, men were being treated worse than animals and the humiliation and insult, disgrace and dishonour were the prominent features of jail life. The insanitary and unhygienic conditions were appalling. It was perhaps the first time when so many respectable citizens were the inmates of that place where felons and criminals are kept. The Superintendent and the Jailor both were as cruel, tyrannous, and brutal as any one with a beastly soul in a human garb can be. I fail to imagine if we could be treated worse. The Superintendent was a European of O'Dwyer School. Indian hater, ultra conservative, member of that service which is neither Indian, nor civil and who are *nabobs* and irresponsible *burra sahibs* and whose sole objective is to kill the self-respect of Indians.

"I well remember that this Superintendent was extremely cruel and actively hostile. We were treated with contempt and contumely. If he could he would have shot us dead. L. Harkishenlal paid him in his coin. One day the Superintendent came to the cell of Lalaji. He wanted him to stand. Lalaji sternly refused to do so. He asked one of his orderlies to use force to make Lalaji stand. On this Lalaji said. 'Don't behave like a cur. Don't ask these men to offer insult to me. If you have the courage, come and make me stand yourself. You will then know the stuff of which I am made.' This finished the Superintendent and he walked away pocketing his false pride and arrogant behaviour. The Jailor was equally bad. Corrupt to the extreme, arrogant and haughty in behaviour, he was not ashamed to treat men like Lala Harkishenlal whose shoes he was not fit to touch in a positively offensive manner. Indians in order to please their masters outheroded Herod and devoid of any finer feelings for the country and their fellow countrymen, they delight in riding roughshod over the feelings of those whose only fault lies in raising their voice of protest against this domination of an alien power.

"One personal incident I am tempted to narrate. My father was also arrested and I met him in the Jail. It is impossible for me to describe the bright glow on his face at thus being called upon to serve his country. He was all the time in the most pleasant mood and though he was anxious for me and also for my children who were left without a male helper or protector he never allowed his spirits to droop. He took it as an honour that he too was made to suffer even though for a brief period, for his country which he loved with a warmth all his own."

CHAPTER XIV

Cause of Unrest in the Punjab

THE Rowlatt Bills, bad as they were, were made even worse and more offensive by the environment in which they were set.

To fight this disease Mahatma Gandhi started the great Satyagraha Movement. The hartal in India is a spiritual weapon the old time method of showing sorrow, of having grievances redressed by patient suffering.

This movement had a very enthusiastic response in the whole of India. Satyagraha day passed of quietly everywhere.

The policy of the Punjab Government in those days and handed down as a legacy to succeeding Lieut.-Governors was to shut their eyes to their own reactionary administration and keep the Viceroys ignorant of the real causes of unrest, with coloured accounts, throwing always the whole blame on the shoulders of the agitator. Repression and terrorisation continued but the bureaucracy has never learnt this lesson, that life of a nation cannot be killed by persecutions and prosecutions. The constitutional agitation perforce is replaced by secret activities which lead to violence on the part of the people. The alien rulers instead of getting at the root cause of the trouble forge more weapons of repression, and make people more and more desperate. Sir Michael relied not on the contentment and love, and willing allegiance of the people but on sheer force to strengthen the British administration in India. During the early days of Sir Michael O'Dwyer's rule the Kamagata Maru incident occurred. The unfortunate men who had left their homes in a spirit of peaceful enterprise, many not wishing to return to India, found every door shut in their faces and were forced to return. On landing in India they found themselves prisoners. Broken down as they were by the misfortunes they had to face, they became desparate and the

Budge Budge incident happened. This brought about the recrudesence of unrest in the Punjab. Defence of India Act was passed and applied to the Punjab and Sir M.O'Dwyer put this repressive measure to the fullest possible use. There were conspiracy trials by special Tribunals constituted under the Defence of India Act. He endeavoured to bring under his control the press and the platform. The vernacular press was ruthlessly suppressed. Public meetings were discouraged by brow beating and threatening the speakers. Hundreds of persons were interned. Political agitation was regarded by him as a danger to the peace and safety of the province. Under the Defence of India Act, Lokmanya Tilak and Sjt. Bepin Chander Pal were prohibited from entering the Province. He believed in strong methods in throttling public agitation, in suppressing criticism of the acts and policy of the Government. Sir Michael O'Dwyer made up his mind to acquire the distinction of being the formost recruiting Agent in India and secured no less than 2 lacs of recruits for the army. He adopted various unlawful and oppressive methods for this purpose. Villages were punished collectively, and individuals were subjected to great hardships and humiliation. Proceedings were taken under Sections 107 and 110, Criminal Procedure Code, with the sole object of compelling the accused either to enlist or supply recruits. Similar methods were employed to swell the provincial contributions to the war loan. One of the favourite methods to deal with those who did not satisfy the conditions of the authorities regarding recruits or war loan was to enhance their income-tax. The unenviable result of the systematic oppression was to spread serious discontent throughout the province. A Tahsildar in the Shahpur district was murdered because of his employing objectionable and oppresive methods in recruiting. These activities regarding recruiting and raising war loan affected all communities but the main burden was on the man behind the plough.

The economic conditions were also very appalling. The people had grown desperate, and they readily joined the agitation against the Government. The war had an unsettling effect on the minds of people all over the world. The sanguine utterances of the allied statesmen had led people to believe that victory would bring a millenium to the world but no such millenium came. The mighty victory of the Allies did not bring any of the promised boons to the Punjabees, who had been forced to give literally their last ounce of blood during the war. The country had been promised a liberal measure of constitutional reforms but it was feared that the Punjab Government was trying its best to make the Punjab's share as small as possible.

Instead of application to India of the doctrine of self-determination which the Allies had adopted as a world programme, the people were stunned to see the Government rushing through the Council a new law (Rowlatt Act).

The peace had come, but the promised boons did not come. The poverty, the high prices, the starvation wages continued. The position of an Indian in India was the same as it was before the war. Naturally there was a deep discontentment among the people. For six long years the Punjab had suffered in silent agony the *zulum* of Sir Michael, who had carried on a ruthless and relentless campaign against all legitimate and peaceful activities. He crushed public life by gagging the newspapers, by prosecuting the leaders about whom he said : "It is clear that the demands emanated not from the masses of people whose interests are at stake but from a small and not quite disinterested minority, naturally enough, eager for power and place. We must, if we are faithful to our trust, place the interests of the silent masses before the clamour of the politicians, however troublesome and insistent. Here I may quote Burke's warning because half a dozen grass-hoppers under a fern make the field ring with their importunate cries, while thousands of great cattle who repose beneath the shadow of British oak, chew their cud and are silent, pray do not imagine that those who make the noise are the only inhabitants of the field."

Regarding this agitation his fulminations are :

"The Government will not delay to use all the means at its disposal to repress disorder. The Government of this province is and will remain determined, that public order which was maintained so successfully during the time of war shall not be disturbed in time of peace. Action has, therefore, been taken in the last few days under the Defence of India Act against certain individuals, in Lahore and Amritsar, who, whatever their motive was, are endeavouring to arouse public feeling against the Government. The British Government who has crushed foreign foes and quelled internal rebellion, could afford to despise these agitators, but it has the duty of protecting the young and the ignorant whom they may incite to mischief and crime while themselves standing aside. The recent peurile demonstrations against the Rowlatt Act in Lahore and Amritsar would, therefore, be ludicrous if they did not indicate how easily ignorant and credulous people—not one in thousand of whom knows anything of the measure—can be misled."

Sir Michael was aware of the fact that the whole province was justly indignant at the oppressive methods of raising recruits and money for the war. He knew of thousands of old decrepit peasants whose sons had been thrust into the army by force and fraud. He was conscious of the fact that hundreds of villages had been ruthlessly depleted of their manhood, he was also aware of thousands of other families which had been impoverished in their attempt to let the bread winner escape from the clutches of the recruiting agent, by bribing him, or buying other recruits for substitution. Above all he realised that by his persistent insults and continued antagonism towards their desires and aspirations he had alienated the sympathies of the educated classes, therefore he considered it dangerous for the masses to take part in any form of political agitation, and wanted the people to quietly sleep when the rest of the country was quite awakened and active, alive and ardent to avail of the effects of victory won mainly with the sword of the Punjab.

Sir Michael O'Dwyer had issued an order against Gandhiji under Defence of India Rules prohibiting him from entering the Punjab, on the ground that his presence in the Punjab was prejudicial to public safety. This order was not served on Gandhiji, but was treated as a state secret until he actually reached Palwal, on his way to Delhi and Amritsar. At this station Gandhiji was shown an order prohibiting him from entering the province. He refused to obey it and expressed his determination to continue the journey. He was therefore arrested and taken back to Bombay. This news reached Lahore and Amritsar on 10th instant. Indian opinion is convinced that the arrest of Gandhiji was a blunder and has been to a great extent responsible for the excitement and bitterness that has followed We venture to think if he had been allowed to go to Delhi and the Punjab, the story before us would have been different. The people were stunned at this outstanding folly of the Punjab Government and were overpowered with grief and consternation at the unjustifiable and humiliating treatment meted out to their highly adored leader whom they regarded as a Rishi or Wali, and whose coming was compared to the coming of Christ or Krishna.

In about half on hour all business was suspended at Lahore and there was a complete *hartal* throughout the town. In about an hour a sort of procession was formed which proceeded towards the Mall. While it was a quarter of a mile from Montgomery Hall, where Sir Michael was being feted at a garden party the procession

was stopped. The processionists refused to disperse and were fired upon.

The orders of deportation against Dr. Satyapal and Dr. Kitchlew were communicated to the Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar on the evening of 9th and were executed on the morning of 10th April. The Deputy Commissioner was not willing to execute these orders because he did not anticipate any disturbance of the public peace. His estimate of the situation was based on the fact that during the *hartals* and even during the excitement of Ram Naumi on the 9th there had been no tendency to violence and no demonstration of hostility to the authorities. But Sir Michael who thought himself to be All-wise and All-powerful did not pay any heed to what the district authorities said or felt. He believed that Mr. Gandhi was the moving spirit of a huge conspiracy to subvert the British Raj by means of public meetings and *hartals* and that Punjab leaders were his agents in fomenting rebellion in his province.

The news of the arrest of Dr. Satyapal and Dr. Kitchlew spread in the town like wildfire and in few a minutes all business was suspended and there was complete *hartal*. The people collected in thousands and decided to go to the Deputy Commissioner to get deportation orders cancelled. They wanted to see the Deputy Commissioner to secure their release. What a child-like faith in the fairness and justice of the British, particularly of the type and school of Sir Michael whose one aim and objective in life was to crush the souls of the Indians.

The crowd was peaceful and non-violent, harmless and we should say fully determined to behave as the worthy followers of Gandhiji and his assistants. But they were stopped from crossing the Railway Bridge, and on their insisting to proceed, were fired upon.

This changed the mood of the people. The people, after seeing some of them killed or wounded, could not keep themselves under full control. If the Deputy Commissioner would have given the people a sympathetic hearing, the crisis might have been averted. But a bureaucrat is devoid of sympathy. That is not his weakness. He knows only one weapon and that is persecution in the form of arrests, detentions, and firing and shooting. Soft words find no room in his armoury. There was firing once, there was firing twice. Bullets greeted the people. A wild roar of anger issued from the public and a perfectly peaceful and law-abiding procession was transformed into an angry crowd by firing which was neither

justifiable nor called for, and then as is usual in such cases, the anger made the people violent and they killed 5 Europeans and looted 3 banks and set them on fire. Miss Sherwood was also assaulted. No language is too strong to condemn the loss of life and property. Every Indian feels very much ashamed that some miscreants behaved in a manner which has brought on slur and disgrace to the fair name of their country.

The authorities are guilty of a grave neglect of their duty. All these banks were in the vicinity of Police Head quarters, and if the police officials had been alive to their duty much of what did happen could have been prevented by a timely interference. The Deputy Commissioner miserably failed in his duty in not making an effort to pacify the people, and also in not taking proper precautions, to maintain peace and order. He should have had sense enough that when he was taking the most serious step of deporting two gentlemen whom people loved and held in high regard, the event must evoke a popular resentment which might have manifested itself in disorder. The people quitened down. The remorse of their misdeeds made them settle down, The Police and the Military did not move their little finger to prevent these tragic incidents or to restore order.

At Lahore.—The news of the events at Amritsar reached Lahore late on the night of 10th. This added to the anger of the people, and on 11th shops were not opened. The people would not do so, till they had performed the final rites of the persons who were killed during the firing on the procession.

The Deputy Commissioner, Lahore, threatened and cajoled the leaders and asked them to get the shops opened. On being requested by the Deputy Commissioner, leaders went to Badshahi Mosque and asked the people to open their shops and obey the authorities. This meeting was considered to be an act of rebellion. On 12th the people who were returning from Badshahi mosque were fired upon, more than 30 casualties were inflicted. The people remained quiet. Leaders met almost daily to devise means to get the shops opened but they were not successful. The people were not agreeable to do so till the conditions laid down by them had been accepted. On the 14th April Lala Harkishan Lal, Lala Duni Chand and Pt. Rambhaj Datta Chowdhary were deported under the Defence of India Rules in the interests of public safety. There were not the slightest semblance of any disturbance at Lahore.

At Gujranwala.—The Deputy Commissioner and the Superintendent of Police had summoned some of the leaders of

the town and coerced them to abandon their intention of holding a protest meeting against the Rowlatt Act. This attempt was not successful. The Hartal was complete, spontaneous and orderly. The news of the arrest of leaders of Amritsar and of Mahatma Gandhi incensed the people and they wanted to observe Hartal on the 11th but the local leaders were able to avert the Hartal. News of Hartal and other events at Lahore, Amritsar, Kasur and other places reached Gujranwala and this town observed Hartal on 14th.

An impartial examination of the events as they actually happened leads to the irresistible conclusion that the disturbances were not pre-arranged, that they were no more than local riots in which a small fraction of the population participated, that the civil authorities never lost control of the situation, that the motive of the people was not to subvert the British rule in India, and that the cause of these was not a propaganda of lawless men but the indiscreet acts of the authorities. On the night of 10th the Commissioner of Lahore division gave over the charge to the Officer Commanding of the troops, to take whatever steps he thought necessary to re-establish civil control. A large number of Englishmen wanted to wreak a terrible vengeance. In the eyes of the vast majority of Englishmen, and more particularly the officials, the life of an Englishman is sacrosanct while the life of an Indian is of no value at all. The officials, both civil and military, wanted to make the retribution so swift and so terrible as to make it impossible for an Indian to look into an Englishman's face without terror. It is believed that not only the notorious Indian-hater, Sir Michael, fully supported and adopted this view but that Lord Chelmsford the then Viceroy expressed his feelings in almost the same phraseology as given above. It was he who wanted to have a holocaust of Indians to teach them a lesson which they would not forget for generations. Though the odium was accepted by the military authorities, in reality the civil authorities right from the Viceroy down to the Police officer were burning with anger and had lost all sobriety of judgement and moderation of action, and were intent upon massacring as many Indians as they could. The Viceroy is said to have remarked that if for one European life a thousand Indians were killed even then he would not feel satisfied. It was suggested and seriously considered by the local officials that the whole town of Amritsar should be bombarded with machine guns. The proposal was dropped because of the Golden Temple, destruction of which might have created a rebellion by subverting the loyalty

of not only the Sikhs and general population of the province but also of the Sikh army.

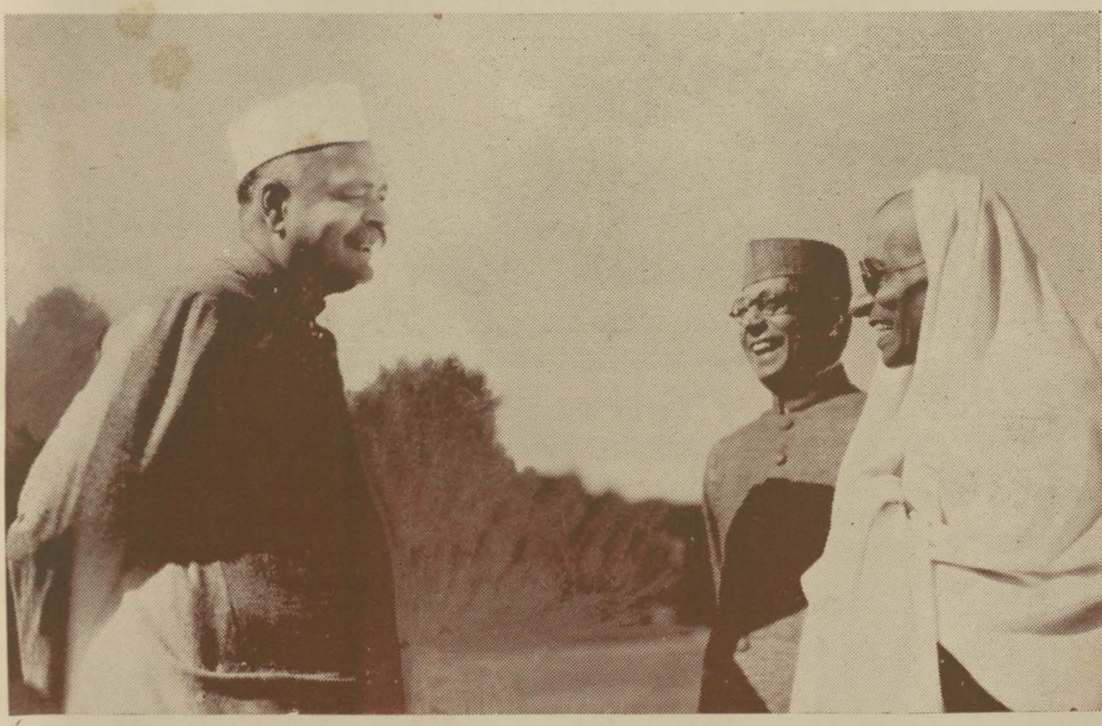
On 11th April the water and electric supply of Indian quarters was cut of. In the evening the Deputy Commissioner handed over the administration of town to General Dyer. He had no authority to do so but who cared for observance of any law when the authorities were dominated by feelings of anger and revenge rather than sobriety and fairness. On the 12th April General Dyer with some troops marched through the town and arrested about a dozen persons.

On the evening of the 11th April Hans Raj, the secret agent of the Police and later an approver in the case against the Amritsar leaders, announced at a public meeting that on 13th a meeting would be held at Jallianwala Bagh under the Presidency of Lala Kanhayalal a veteran lawyer of Amritsar whose name was used without his knowledge. On the morning of 13th at about 9-30 a.m. General Dyer, with some executive, and police officers and some troops marched through a portion of the town and read out a proclamation regarding processions and meetings. This was read in a small portion of the town and was heard by very few people. The proclamation was vague and indefinite and the people did not at all conclude from that any gathering will be fired at. It was intentionally made so. He wished to secure the attendance of the largest number of persons at the meeting of the evening, so that he could get an oppotunity to kill or wound the largest number possible. People were never warned against acting upon what looked like an invitation to an innocent meeting, and no steps were taken to stop the announcement. General Dyer intentionally and wilfully set a death trap for the people of Amritsar. All possible means were adopted to swell the number of the audience. About 25 thousand persons assembled at the Jallianwala Bagh. There was a considerable number of peasants present at the meeting. They were unarmed, only a few had even walking sticks with them. A large number of persons, gathered there, must have been ingnorant of any proclamation. Ever since General Dyer had arrived at Amritsar he was preparing his forces for the great hour of vengeance.

At 12-15 p.m. General Dyer received information that the meeting is likely to be a grand success. At 4 p.m. he was informed that the meeting was an accomplished fact. The General was overjoyed at this information and marched off towards the city soon after. About a quarter of an hour before the General reach-



The
Three
Fountains
of
Nation's
Inspiration



Soldiers all ! Their lives dedicated to the Nation

ed the Bagh, aeroplanes had been sent on to reconnoitre the situation, and that this was presumbly a pre-arranged signal for the police officials to leave the Bagh. It is significant that out of thousands of persons killed or wounded at the Bagh, there was not a single belonging to the Police or the C.I.D.

The General arrived at the Bagh with 40 Gurkhas armed with Khukhries, 25 Sikhs and 25 Gurkhas, who were all armed with rifles. He had also two armoured cars with machine guns which he could not use to his utter chagrin and disappointment, because of the narrowness of the entrance. He had come with a definite determination to mow down the audience, to kill and wound practically every one present there, and he was extremely upset to find that the cars could not be taken inside the Bagh, and he could not fully carry out his nefarious design. The General reached the Bagh at about 5 or 5-15 p.m. and opened fire without any warning. Hans Raj who was acting under the instructions of General Dyer kept the audience in tact by giving assurances that there will be no firing or bombarding.

The remorseless pride, the inhuman relish and the callous impudence with which General Dyer recounted his story before the Hunter Commission of his savage butchery, considerably aggravates his crime. He admitted that it was the outcome of his deliberate desire to teach the inhabitants of Amritsar a terrible lesson, for having killed Europeans and to create a widespread feeling of terror among the people of the Punjab.

On being asked that if the passage were sufficient to allow the armoured cars to go in, would he have opened fire with machine guns, he replied that if these could go in he would have opened fire with the machine guns straight. General Dyer said that he did a merciful act in thus shooting innocent and unarmed people. He said : " I thought it would do a jolly lot of good to the people."

On being asked as to why firing did not cease, after the crowd was dispersing, he replied : " I thought it my duty to go on until it had fully dispersed."

Dyer further said : " I think it is quite possible that I could have dispersed them perhaps even without firing, but they would have all come back and laughed at me and I should have made what I considered a fool of myself."

The General admitted that he had marched to the Bagh with the intention of shooting the people down regardless of the fact whether violence was attempted or done by the crowd.

In all one thousand six hundred and fifty rounds were fired and according to the General's computation three or four persons could have been killed or wounded by each bullet. These were directed towards those points where the crowd was thickest. It is estimated that at least 1,000 were killed and 3 or 4 thousand wounded. After exhausting the ammunition the General left the Bagh without giving a moment's thought to the thousands of persons including many boys and children who had been killed or what was worse wounded, in the massacre. The General refused to send for a doctor to look after the wounded on the plea that it was 'medical' and not a military affair. It was not his job to attend to this side of the question. His job was to kill and not to heal. He was a butcher and he knew of nothing else but to kill the inhabitants of this country as rebels and to shoot them ruthlessly. Curfew order was in force. None dare stir out of the doors and thus the wounded lay there in close vicinity of the sacred sarovar which promises life to one and all, crying for a drop of water. A lady who had the courage to go there in order to find about her husband gave a description of the night, which makes one's hair stand on end. People cried with agony and anguish. None to quench their thirst none to attend to their bleeding and gaping wounds what a frightful spectacle and what a scandalous state of affairs! The members of the police were actively busy in removing cash and valuables from the persons of the dead and the wounded.

General Dyer's intellect was darkened and his conscience blinded by a mad desire for vengeance. He was a murderer. He was convicted out of his own mouth. He was made to retire but he was presented with 50 thousand pounds by his countrymen in England for having killed innocent, harmless, unarmed, peaceful; peace loving and non-violent people without giving them any warning to disperse. Rather he aimed his bullets on those who were trying to get out of the bagh. This is the saddest and most revolting of the tragedies. No Indian and perhaps no true Englishman can listen to the story of this Khuni Bagh without a sickening feeling of horror. Mr. Andrews described it as "a cold and calculated massacre." He said: "I have gone into every single detail with all the care and thoroughness that a personal investigation could command, and it remains to me as an unspeakable disgrace, indefensible, unpardonable and inexcusable. The official mentality is evidenced by this fact that no high official protested against this huge massacre."

On December 19, 1919, there appeared a leading article in 'India' of London a passage from which is as follows:

"For eight months the truth has been held back from the

British people, but now at last they learn from the mouth of the man who did, namely General Dyer what was done to paralyse and terrorise Amritsar into submission and even after the orgies of cruelty of the last few years, England reels with the shock. The whole affair is strongly reminiscent of Waterloo whose centenary we must have been keeping a few weeks after a practical repetition of it. Even Mr. Montague, the Secretary of State for India was not permitted to know the whole truth because he made statements in the House of Commons which were at variance with real facts."

At Gujranwala the aeroplane threw bombs at the people who were peacefully doing their routine work. No warning was given to Gujranwala or the neighbouring villages before the aeroplanes commenced their operations. Even the courtesy extended to Frontier tribesmen was denied to peaceful Indians. There was indiscriminate bombardment at various places



CHAPTER XV

The Martial Law Regime

MARTIAL Law was established in the districts of Amritsar and Lahore on 15th April and at other places at later dates. This declaration of Martial Law against unarmed civil population was entirely unjustifiable and uncalled for. The civil power was never overpowered or rendered incapable of performing its duties. All that martial law accomplished was a change of names the methods and the shifting of responsibility from the civil to military authorities.

Flogging.—Among the horrors, sufferings and indignities to which the people were subjected under Martial Law, public flogging was perhaps the most humiliating and hurting. The victim was stripped bare of his clothes in the public gaze and was tied to the triangle. The man who administered lashes used all the force he could command. After the first-two stroke the victim would burst forth into loud shrieks of agony, bleeding and in some cases the man would become unconscious because of increased bleeding, and by the dread of coming lashes. He would be restored to consciousness, the flogging will re-start, and so on; some were taken down from the triangle and re-tied twice or thrice before the sentence passed on them could be finished. The General supported public flogging and said that this was calculated to make a good impression on the rebels. In the opinion of Col. Frank Johnson it was the kindliest method of punishment. His opinion would have changed entirely, if he had a taste of this punishment. He thought jail was an extraordinarily comfortable place and that flogging was preferable to jails.

The lawyers were made to witness this brutality. Prostitutes of Kasur were summoned to witness the flogging.

Crawling Order.—General Dyer issued the following order :

"The street must be blocked at both ends. No Indian must be allowed to go through, and if he did go through, he must do so on all fours. This was interpreted as Crawling Order. All people who lived in this street or had to pass through were made to crawl after the manner of worms and reptiles. Even a blind man had to do the same. The old and the young, the rich and the poor, the thin and the fat, all had to submit to this atrocious order. If by any chance the crawling was not satisfactorily done, he was struck down to the ground with the rifle butts of the British soldiers whose behaviour is generally offensive, and in those days it had become extremely so, and was made to crawl again. It is difficult to imagine the sufferings and hardships of the residents of this lane. The scavengers did not go to their houses which were rendered extremely dirty and filthy.

This crawling was the punishment given to those who in the opinion of General Dyer were not servile enough to satisfy him. The whole history of the administration of Martial Law in the Punjab may be summarised in the Crawling Order. The barbarities, the vindictivenes, the utter disregard of the liberties, of the feelings and the self-respect of the people and the absence of all discrimination between the guilty and the innocent in the attempt to terrorise and humiliate the whole of Indian population of the affected area are all present in the Crawling Order and the manner in which it was worked.

CONGRESS REPORT ON PUNJAB DISORDERS

A Sub-Committee was appointed by the Congress in November 1919, to enquire into the Punjab disorders with Mahatma Gandhi as its Chairman. The report of that Committee was published in May, 1920. It was signed by Messrs. Gandhi, C. R. Das, Abbas Tyabji and Jayakar. It had examined over 1,700 cases and selected 650 statements for publication.

Here are a few extracts from that report:

1. We believe that had Mr. Gandhi not been arrested whilst he was on his way to Delhi, and the Punjab, and had Kitchlew and Satyapal not been arrested and deported, innocent English lives would have been saved and valuable property not destroyed. These two acts of the Punjab Government were uncalled for and served like matches applied to material rendered inflammable by previous processes. These arrests were unjustifiable and were the only direct cause of the hysterical popular excitement.

2. The people of the Punjab were incensed against Sir Michael O'Dwyer's administration by reason of his studied contempt and distrust of the educated classes and by the reason of the cruel and compulsory methods adopted during the war for obtaining recruits and monetary contributions, and by his suppression of public opinion by gagging the local press, and shutting out nationalist newspapers from outside the Punjab.

3. The Rowlatt Agitation disturbed the public mind and shook confidence in the goodwill of the Government.

4. Mob violence which began at Amritsar was directly due to the firing at the Railway bridge and the sight of dead and wounded at a time when the excitement had reached white heat.

5. Whatever be the cause of provocation, the mob excesses are deeply to be regretted and condemned.

6. No reasonable cause has been shown to justify the introduction of Martial Law and it was unduly prolonged.

7. Most of the measures taken under Martial Law, in all the five districts, were unnecessary, cruel, oppressive and in utter disregard of the feelings of the people affected by them.

8. The Jallianwala Bagh massacre was a calculated piece of inhumanity towards utterly innocent and unarmed men including children and unparalleled for its ferocity in the history of modern. British administration.

9. The Crawling Order and other fancy punishments were unworthy of a civilised administration and were symptomatic of moral degradation of their inventors.

10. The corruption and bribery that took place during Martial Law form a separate chapter of grievance.

11. Martial Law Tribunals and Summary Courts were made the means of harrassing innocent people and resulted in an abortion of justice on a wide scale and under the name of justice caused moral and material suffering to hundreds of men and women.

The measures necessary for reducing the wrong done to the people and for the purification of the administration and for preventing repetition in future lawlessness are:

1. Repeal of Rowlatt Act.

2. Relieving Sir Michel O'Dwyer of any responsible office under the Crown.

3. Relieving General Dyer, Col. Johnson, Col. O'Brien,

Mr. Bosworth Smith, Mr. Siri Ram Sud and Malik Sahib Khan of any position of responsibility under the Crown.

4. Local inquiry into the corrupt practices of minor officials whose names have been mentioned in the statements published by us and their dismissal on proof of guilt.

5. Recall of the Viceroy.

6. Refund of fines collected from the people, who were convicted by Special Tribunals and Summary Courts.

7. Remission of all indemnities imposed on the cities affected and the refund thereof where it has already been collected, and removal of punitive police.

It is our deliberate opinion that Sir Michael O'Dwyer, General Dyer, Colonel Johnson, Colonel O'Brien, Mr. Bosworth Smith, Mr. Siri Ram Sud and Malik Sahib Khan have been guilty of such illegalities that they deserve to be impeached but we purposely refrain from advising any such course because we believe India can only gain by waiving this right. Future purity will be sufficiently guaranteed by the dismissal of the officials concerned.

The Disorders Inquiry Committee commonly known as Hunter Committee was appointed by the Governor-General in Council on October 14, 1919. There were eight members and it was presided over by Lord Hunter. Lord Hunter and other four British members signed one report and three Indian members signed another. The majority report was the most conservative. It criticised more or less severely the officers responsible for the administration of Martial Law but its chief censure was reserved for General Dyer's conduct at the Jallianwala Bagh. He had fired upon an unarmed mob without warning, he had continued to fire after most of the mob had begun to disperse and he had failed to make any provision for aiding the wounded and removing the dead.

General Dyer had himself admitted that his mind was made up before he reached the Bagh. He fired longer than necessary because he was determined to reduce the morale of the rebels and strike terror throughout the Punjab. The General said that it was not his job to take care of the wounded. The evidence certainly indicates that General Dyer was in no mood to be influenced by humanitarian considerations. The Government of India accepted the Hunter Report and in co-operation with Military authorities took steps to discipline the officials who were censured. General Dyer was removed from command and

informed that he would receive no further employment in India. General Campbell and a few other officers were informed that the Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army strongly disapproved of the salaming orders, the whipping of school boys and other abuses criticised in the reports. Some of the civilian officers were also told that their conduct in certain cases was regrettable or injudicious and improper and that they had incurred the strong disapproval of the Government of India. Some of Sir Michael O'Dwyer's acts were mildly criticised but his general conduct was approved and he was commended by His Majesty's Government for his energy, decision and courage.

Although General Dyer's punishment was regarded as entirely inadequate in India there was a large section of the public in England who agreed with Sir Michael O'Dwyer that the action taken at the Jallianwala Bagh was the decisive factor in crushing the rebellion.

The House of Lords voted against the Government though the noble Lords' action could have no constitutional value, it was yet an index to the depth of English ignorance and prejudice. *the Morning Post* raised about £50,000 by popular subscription and presented it to General Dyer as a token of the regard and gratitude of conservative Britain. The *Pioneer* and other papers followed the lead of the *Morning Post* and appealed for funds towards a memorial to this 'gallant' soldier who shot men like rabbits.

GURU DEVA'S PROTEST

Guru Deva Rabindra Nath Tagore has been acclaimed by the world as one of its greatest poets and literary geniuses. He was our guide, philosopher and preceptor. What Plato and Socrates were to the ancient Western world, Rabindra Nath is to modern India. He is the Acharya or the high priest of our nation in all the varied branches our national literature and Art, Social and Political philosphy, constructive economic policy for mass amelioration and social reconstruction. He has indeed been the Gurudeva of the nation in a very true and real sense. Tagore was the poet and minstrel who provided the emotional inspiration that enthused the whole nation. Young Bengal in the early years of 20th century drew its strength and courage from the fountain of Tagore's inspired songs and writings. What could be more sustaining and ennobling than the rousing message of the Poet:

As indeed their grip will tighten
So indeed will our bond break.
The more that their eyes will be bloodred
The more will our eyes open.

He was a glory to India and glory to the human race.

The Punjab has special reasons to be eternally grateful to this standard-bearer of Indian Nationalism. He took a very memorable stand when the Punjab was bleeding and groaning, because of the indescribable atrocities that had been committed and the ruthless repression that was carried on for a long time. Gurudev renounced his title and addressed the memorable letter to the Viceroy which we reproduce below:

Your Excellency !

"The enormity of the measure taken by the Government of the Punjab for quelling some local distrubances has, with a rude shock, revealed to our minds the helplessness of our position as British subjects in India. The disproportionate severity of the punishments inflicted upon the unfortunate people and methods of carrying them out, we are convinced, are without parallel in the history of civilised Governments, barring some conspicuous exceptions recent or remote, considering that such treatment has been meted out to a population disarmed and resourceless, by a power which has the most terribly efficient organisation for destruction of human lives. We must strongly assert that it can claim no political expediency, far less moral justification. The accounts of the insults and sufferings undergone by our brothers in the Punjab have trickled through the gagged silence, reaching every corner of India, and the universal agony of indignation roused in the hearts of our people has been ignored by our rulers possibly congratulating themselves for imparting what they imagine as salutary lessons. The callousness has been praised by most of the Anglo-Indian papers, which have, in some cases gone to the brutal length of making fun of our sufferrings, without receiving the least check from the same authority, relentlessly careful in smothering every cry of pain, and expression of judgement from the organs representing the sufferers. Knowing that our appeals have been in vain, and that the passion of vengeance is blinding the noble vision of statesmanship of our Government which could so easily afford to be magnanimous as befitting its physical strength and moral tradition, the very least that I can do for my country is to take all consequences upon myself in giving voice to the protest of the millions of my countrymen

surprised to a dumb anguish of terror. The time has come when badges of honour make our shame glaring in the incongruous contact of humiliation, and I for my part wish to stand shorn of all special distinction by the side of those of my countrymen who for their so-called insignificance are liable to suffer degradation not fit for human beings. And these are the reasons which have painfully compelled me to ask your Excellency, with due deference and regret, to relieve me of my title of Knighthood, which I had the honour to accept from His Majesty the King at the hands of your predecessors, for whose nobleness of heart I still entertain great admiration.

Sir C. Sankaran Nair a member of the Viceroy's Executive Council resigned his office as a protest against the import of Martial Law in the Punjab. He showed his resentment at the indefensible behaviour of the Government of India in supporting the Punjab Government in all its misdeeds by taking this effective step.



CHAPTER XVI

The Rise of the Extremist Party

SINCE the early days of the revival of political activities in India, there have ever existed two parties, one of those people who were loyal to the British Rule, and who pinned their faith on Britain's promises. Their demands were extremely moderate, their requests were humiliatingly humble, their comments lacked force and grit. They depended on the British sense of justice and fairness which though found in excess in copybooks, was eschewed altogether from their dealings with India and its population, and its problems.

There was a nationalist party, which was not very vocal because of the unfavourable environments, but was very effective and powerful. They had burnt their boats. They had no faith in the so-called constitutional agitation. They had no interest in petitions and prayers. They abhorred and hated the professions of loyalty, and avowals of any affection for the British throne or nation. They had strong aversion for British rule, and their culture, and civilization, and their methods of government. They regarded them as usurpers and had resolved to liberate India from their clutches as early as possible. The Government had a strong and deep hatred for both of these movements, but it had to choose the lesser evil. It gave the appearance of tolerating and supporting, and even helping the so-called constitutional agitation, but hurled at the nationalists all the bombs of repression and tyranny with all its might and main. To Lokmanya Tilak belongs the credit of giving a true lead to his country. He rose considerably higher than his compatriots. To him is the glory and honour due for inaugurating and initiating a policy of self-reliance and self-determination and pursuing the ideal of self-effacement, self-sacrifice, and self-anhilia-tion, in the service of motherland, to attain Self-Government or Swaraj.

His forceful writings in Kesari and his vigorous and soulful speeches generated a new life in Poona and Bombay. But his methods and organizations wete not confined to his own province only. He was the political Guru of the whole of the young generation of India. The Bengal and the Punjab were considerably influenced by his precepts and preachings, by his writings, and actions, and above all, by his sacrifices and sufferings. It will need volumcs to faithfully describe his magnificient contributions to the political advancement of India. We append a brief account of the activities of those youngmen who imbibed his spirit, and offered their blood and bones, life and property, body and soul, to their motherland. He was the moving spirit of thc whole of the nationalist India of those days. We are conscious of the fact that these martyrs deserve a much better recognition at the hands of posterity. We will confine ourselves to make just a reference to few remarkable incidents to give some idea of the spirit prevalent in those days among the youngmen of this country.

THE PUNJAB

The Punjab a land of heroes, the sword hand of India, the Punjab which had produced Ranjit Singh, the Punjab where martial races have been living eversince prehistoric times, lagged behind at the time of National revolt. Had this province in general, and Sikhs in particular lent their head and heart to further the progress of National Revolt of 1857 India would not have been dyed red on the map.

Even after the origin of the Congress, the Punjab was not in line with other provinces. It lagged considerably behind. The reason is not far to seek. The educated community of this province in general, and the lawyers in particular were deeply immersed in grinding their own axes, and had not the slightest courage and strength to mem the wrath of the Gods in power. The bureaucracy who ruled the destinies of this province was bent on crushing even the vestiges of self-respect of the Punjabees. They were determined to isolate it from other provinces, and to keep it a close preserve for the British. They wished to make it an ulster of India. The autocratic officials left no weapon of tyranny and repression unused to strike terror into the hearts of the people and overawe them. But there is a broad silver lining to this darkest cloud. And it is a matter of genuine pride that under such depressing and distressing conditions arose a band of youngmen in the province who with their heads on their palms, started on the march towards freedom. They were inspired by the writings and

sufferings of Lokmanya. They were electrified by his declaration, 'Swaraj is my birthright and I shall have it."

This band was led by S. Ajit Singh. His associates were his two brothers S. Kishen Singh and S. Swarn Singh, and Mehta Anand Kishore, L. Pindi Dass. Lal Chand Falak, Sufi Amba Pershad, L. Banke Dyal and Dr. Ishwari Pershad and many others. They founded an organization called Anjuman Muhibban-i-Wattan, popularly known as Bharat Mata. It would need volumes to describe the heroic deeds and valiant acts of these selfless, self-sacrificing, self-renouncing and self-annihilating youngmen Ajit Singh was a marvellous speaker and an impressive writer and above all a wonderful organizer. He led the movement in a fearless manner and in a dauntless spirit. The partition of Bengal had convulsed the Bengalies but the whole of India shared their grief and sorrow. The Punjab was also affected by the fierce agitation carried on by the Bengalies to get the settled fact unsettled. To add to all this the Punjab Government passed a Colonization Act which was a very repressive measure, calculated to tighten the chains around the necks of the peasants of Lyallpur and other districts. The provisions of this Act were not only very humiliating and degrading, but they were actually intended to reduce to serfdom those who owned and tilled lands. S. Ajit Singh is a jat, and as such, he commanded the confidence and respect of the peasants. He felt the pinch and he believed with others that this act would reduce their status, curtail their rights, restrict their liberties and deprive them of their hard earned income. They by their own efforts had converted the deserts into gardens, and transformed the desolate lands into fields laden with crops and when all this had been done the Government by a stroke of pen wished to snatch much of their richly deserved fruit of labour.

S. Ajit Singh took up this cause, and with the co-operation of his friends started an agitation the like of which the Punjab had not witnessed before, literally he aroused the slumbering lion of the Punjab and kindled a burning fire of patriotism out of the smouldering embers. He addressed innumerable public meetings, and kept his audiences spell bound. His speeches were a mine of information. He would quote chapter and verse, facts and figures to establish his case that the British have reduced a prosperous India to a poor and penurious India, have transformed the land of plenty into a land of poverty. There was pathos. There was reason and emotion, there was appeal to head and heart. The meetings started with L. Banke Dayal's soul-stirring song "Pagri Sambhal oh Jatta." O peasant take care of thy turban (an emblem

of self-respect). This Punjabee song became so popular that it was on the tongue of young and old, children and adults. It described the woes and worries, troubles and hardships, sorrows, and sufferings, agonies and miseries, of a peasant and it exhorted him to discover himself and his capacity and capability and to win his lost respect and dignity.

He addressed monster gatherings at Amritsar and Lyallpur. The meeting at the latter place was a very magnificent and momentous one. Their final decision was taken to offer passive resistance. Long before the apostle of passive resistance came on the scene, this weapon was availed of in the Punjab. Thousands of peasants expressed their determination to cease overting of canal water and to pay no *abiana*. A cable was sent to the Secretary of State communicating to him this decision of the people.

This enraged the official world and a short tempered Lt.-Governor Sir Denial Ibbetson. As was the wont of Punjab bureaucracy, instead of conciliating and sympathising with the people who formed the backbone of this province he resorted to further repression and under an obsolete regulation, *i.e.*, Regulation III of 1818 deported Lala Lajpat Rai and S. Ajit Singh. He represented to the Viceroy and the Secretary of State for India that if immediately drastic steps were not taken the events of 1857 will be repeated. He alarmed the Government of India by saying that the situation was getting out of hands and that that year was the 50th anniversary of National Revolt and hence he was sure that something very serious would happen if the movement was not nipped in the bud. While such a vigorous agitation was being carried on the platform, these young men availed of the press to implement that agitation.

Lala Pindi Dass who was then hardly out of his teens just a stirpling took upon himself the onerous task of starting a weekly called "India" from Gujranwala the birth place of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. A special and attractive feature of this paper was a series of articles called 'Shiv Shambhoo Ka Chittha' Letter of Shiv Shambhoo' this being the pen name of L. Pindi Dass.

These letters were full of pungent and spicy, sweet and tasty, humourous and witting thrusts and sallies on the misdeeds of officials and their reactionary policy. These became the rage of the day and people loved to read these with zest and avidity.

The circulation of the paper increased by leaps and bounds, and if printing arrangements were possible it could have gone to 6 figures. The Government was very much upset and non-plussed.

The District Magistrate, Gujranwala, summoned Lala Pindi Dass, frightened him and then placated him. He resorted to frowns and promises of favours, prosecution and now of handsome rewards. In short every weapon was used but all to no avail. Lala Pindi Dass is a man of iron will, resolute mind and grim determination, undaunted by prosecution and unmoved by threats and unmindful of the consequences, the caravan of his paper moved on, the official and semi-official dogs barked on. It created an unprecedented stir in the province. His was a marvellous feat. He worked a miracle. He achieved a phenomenal success. But at last the wheels of repression ground him down. His paper was suppressed. He was prosecuted and convicted and sentenced to 5 years' R. I. And thus ended the glorious career of the paper started and conducted by a young man with no resources and no helpers. Faith in the righteousness of his cause and confidence in his and his friends' determination to fall not and to fail not and with trust in Providence he started on uncharted and perilous journey. He did not bend. He did not yield. He did not surrender. Since then he has been several times interned and detained but he is as bright and brave a patroit as he was then. The Government had so arranged that he be bodily assaulted and done to death but a band of youngmen became his bodyguards and thus this move of the Government was foiled.

Sardar Ajit Singh was released after some time. He wished to restart his activities but he found Punjab too hot for himself and he and Sufi Amba Pershad went to Iran. Sufi shot himself dead or was killed In Iran. Sardar Ajit Singh settled in western countries. Today he is lying ill suffering from a serious disease far away from his country. He is yearning to come back to his country. Who knows if he will ever be allowed to pay his personal respects to his country for the sake of which he has undergone heavy sufferings. His wife and his other relatives are eagerly awaiting his return. May he be able to return to his home!

Sardar Kishen Singh his elder brother and right hand man is on a sick bed. He has suffered heavily and his greatest sacrifice is this, that his eldest son Sardar Bhagat Singh kissed the rope of the executioner to do penance for the sins of all those who directly and indirectly helped to stabilise the British Raj. His two other sons have been in jail for years and years. Lal Chand

Falak, the nationalsist poet, had a paper *Hindi* of his own at Sialkot. He has made a very handsome contribution towards the nationalist literature of the province. His poems have done a distinguished service to his country. He, Sardar Ajit Singh, Sufi Amba Pershad, Lala Pindi Dass and other writers of that school and that age have done the same service to the Punjab as Bankim Chandra Chatterji and other writers rendered to Bengal to make it stand upright.

Some of the heroes of that time are taking eternal rest. Those who are still with us, have the same burning enthusiasm and ardent desire to set their country free. The flesh has grown, weak, age, poverty and continued sufferings have undermined their health but the soul is as bright and shining as ever.

Public memory is proverbially short. New goods are in demand. But let us not forget that this tree of nationalism which is now blossoming was planted by these heroes and has been kept alive with their blood. To their sacrifices and sufferings, to their trials and troubles, to their exertions and efforts, we owe a heavy debt of gratitude, and if we cannot benefit them in material form let us not be niggardly in paying our full tribute of admiration and praise to these living martyrs to whom rightly belongs the credit of revivifying the Punjab and making it worthy of being styled the land of heroes.

EXTREMIST ACTIVITIES IN BENGAL

Nowhere did Tilak's methods and organaization attract more attention than in Bengal. Lord Curzon's partition of 1905 provided a very substantial cause of unrest in Bengal. Swami Vivekanand preached nationalism with religious tendencies. Revolutionary doctrines intermingled with appeals to excellence of Indian culture and civilization were given publicity to. The victory of Japanese in the Russo-Japanese war considerably influenced the behaviour of Indians and made them believe in oriental supremacy and superiority in the material world also. The Indian Political Sentiment reached an unprecedented height of bitterness. India whose civilization had been tarnished by British cruelty and oppression would recover her ancient glory only if it is taken out of the clutches of the British. The type of literature which had originated with Raja Ram Mohan Roy and was subsequently imitated and improved upon by Vidya Sagar, Bankim Chandra and Rabindra Nath Tagore considerably influenced the conduct of young Bengalees. Aravindo

Ghose's fiery and forceful writings appealed very much to the heads and hearts of the young Bengal. The very mysticism of Vedanta became the mystic adoration of motherland, and created an intense national fervour. Aravindo and his co-workers were the main instruments in the combination of Vivekanand's Neo-Vedantism with nationalised politics. The mystic interpretation and worship of Sakti substantially contributed to the growth of this movement.

In Bengal this movement was at its height in 1907. The anti-partition agitation, the growth of the idea of resistance to Imperialist oppression, the flourishing of the idea of nationalism, the boycott and Swadeshi movements all made the nationalists more active, and as they were ousted out of the Congress, and as the repressive policy of the Government suppressed all constitutional activities these people went underground. Their idea was that a few heroes must actively inflict suffering on themselves and by their sufferings and sacrifices bring the revolution to the door of the masses. This school maintained that in killing tyrants and oppressors they were but instruments in the hands of a superior power, they were but carrying out the divine will. But it was at the same time perfectly clear to them that this policy could not bring about a Revolution because unless the masses awakened to their sense of duty, any revolution, is impossible. Mahatma Gandhi, the apostle of non-violence rightly hit at the point and to him belongs the credit of bringing about this turning point in the views of the people, that, leaving aside the undesirability or otherwise of adopting violent methods in the liberation of India individual acts of terrorism can by no stretch of imagination produce the results aimed at by revolutionaries. This movement, therefore, failed in spite of the enormous sacrifices of those who participated in it. It is impossible to sufficiently admire the brave patriotism of these heroes and martyrs but we cannot refrain from the expression of opinion that this movement while entailing heaviest sacrifices from and of individuals could not in the long run awaken the masses, without whose participating in the revolution it could never succeed.

The following Samities were engaged in these activities :

1. Calcutta Anusilan Samiti.
2. Yugantar Group of Calcutta.
3. The East Club of Calcutta.
4. The Saraswati Samiti of Calcutta.
5 The Suharid Samiti of Mymensingh.

6. The Bandhab Samiti of Barisal.
7. The Yuva Samiti of Faridpur
8. Jana Mangal Samiti of Bogra.
9. Dacca Anusilan Samiti of Dacca and its branches.

The basis of these organizations was individualistic. The cementing factor was loyalty to a particular individual. This minimised the chances of detection and resultant blowing up by the police, but it reduced the effectiveness of these organisations.

From 1907 to 1914 the following important events happened:

1. Muzzaffarpur bomb was thrown on Mrs. Kennedy and Miss Kennedy. Both were killed. It was intended for Mr. Kingsford, Presidency Magistrate. Khudi Ram Bose and Prafulla Chaki were convicted of these murders. The former was hanged and the later shot himself dead.

2. Murder of Naren Goswami an approver. Kanai Datta and Satyen Bose were hanged in this case.

3. Attempt on the life of Sir Andrew Franster, Lt.,-Governor, Bengal. Bhupen Bose was transported for life in this case.

4. Murder of Bankim Chander Datta a police official of Mymensingh.

The important cases were.

1. The Maniktala Conspiracy case and the supplementary Maniktala case.

2. The Dacca Conspiracy case.

3. The Barisal Conspiracy case.

4. The Second Dacca Conspiracy case.

1914-17 German Imperialism tried to utilise the revolutionary movement in India for fomenting revolt in India. The prestige of the British was at a low level and to add to this there was economic distress. It increased the scope of activities of the Revolutionaries. Links through Gaddar party were established with foreign organizations.

In Calcutta:

Murder of Deputy Superintendent, Police, Suresh Mukerji.

Murder of Deputy Superintendent, Police, Basant Chatterji.

Balasore fighting Jatna Mukerji and Chettapriya Dey.

Manoranjan and Miran were hanged.

Gauhati shooting and Kultabara fighting, Chittagong Sadar Ghat shooting and other events took place.

1921-29.—The impact of the Congress movement led to a new orientation. The revolutionaries changed their policy and programme and joined the Congress. They became prominent workers in this movement. Sporadic cases however occurred, for example murder of Mr. Day and a bomb was thrown at the shop of a suspected agent provocateur.

There were two conspiracy cases. A Superintendent of Police was murdered in Alipur Jail.

In 1926 a new students' movement developed in Bengal in All-Bengal Students' Association. It became a recruiting ground for various revolutionary organizations. Some tried to convert this into a communist movement.

The Government locked up youngmen in thousands. Thus the revolutionary movement died. But now and then several incidents during the period occurred. Some of these are the following.

Three District Magistrates of Midnapore were shot dead.

Attempt was made on the life of Governor of Bengal by a young girl.

District Magistrate of Comilla was shot dead by two girls.

The most important being Chittagong armoury raid.

It was Bengal which gave shelter to alien and where the British established their power in their early career. It is here that by force and fraud, treachery and trickery, these people got a hold. The hospitality of Bengal resulted in an almost a perpetual hostility. In a long number of years it was the citadel of Anglo-Indian bureaucracy, from here were the weapons forged to snatch the liberty of the people. But it was Bengal which gave the first revolutionary, Raja Ram Mohan Roy, from here also the greasing of cartridges agitation started and it was in Bengal that the fire of National Revolt of 1857 got ablaze. It is Bengal which gave the Congress its first president. It is Bengal which produced Swami Vivekanand. It is Bengal which gave us the soul-stirring song of Bande-Mataram. It is the Bengal which gave Surrender Nath Bannerji whose fine stentorian orations revivified India. It is Bengal which gave Sjt. Aravindo Ghose a mystic revolutionary. It is Bengal which gave Deshbandhu Dass who sacrificed his all for his country. It is Bengal in which the

Revolutionary Movement had its origin and it is here that the movement acquired might and strength sufficient to harass and embarrass the Government. It is here that the girls took an active interest in the betterment of their country. And to this province belongs the credit of producing Netaji Subhas Bose, the illustrious leader who has revolutionised the Indian Politics and at whose bidding the flower of India offered themselves for destruction, inspired by whom thousands of yougmen have made huge sacrifices for achieving Independence for their country. The whole of the country owes a deep debt of gratitude to this province which can claim the largest credit for a very substantial contribution both in evolutionary and revolutionary, peaceful and violent, open and secret movements instituted and installed for the attainment of our goal.

CHAPTER XVII

Indians Abroad

WHILE India was struggling to achieve freedom, Indians abroad were very active in supplementing the efforts of Indians in India. Economic pressure had compelled them to leave their country. Not a mouthful of food, not a rag for a raiment could they have from their motherland, and hence in an adventurous spirit they left India to find fresh fields and pastures new. They did not meet with any enthusiastic encouragement in any country. Those whom their own country cannot feed and support seldom find an honourable living in alien lands. No other country is so hospitable as India. Oriental hospitality has no equal. Indians were so generous to foreigners that they lost their crown and throne in the pursuit of their ideal of hospitality, but Indians received kicks and blows wherever they went, but by dint of their efforts and energy they established themselves in the foreign lands. They had their own difficulties but they bravely faced them and in spite of the serious handicaps they never forgot their own country and did all they could to hasten the advance of Swaraj. We can give a glimpse of the patriotic activities of our countrymen abroad. We wish that elaborate and detailed accounts be placed in the hands of Indians, to inform them of the sufferings and sacrifices of those of us who had left India in their despair and distress and yet whose hearts beat in union with their downtrodden countrymen who in their own country were being treated as untouchables and whose prestige and position had been reduced to almost a zero. What a calamity! To be treated as pariahs and to be ridiculed and humiliated in one's own country is an unenviable lot. What a fall! In India and abroad the descendants

of a nation which ruled and reigned once far and wide are now being treated in the most miserable manner. It goes without saying that there can be no hope of India being treated with dignity and respect unless they remove the stain and stigma of slavery and subjugation and we are proud to say that in this direction the efforts of Indians abroad are worthy of admiration.

During the early years of twentieth century the Canadian Government badly wanted labour for the Timber Mills and other development schemes. The terms offered, being very attractive, thousands of Indians mostly Punjabis reached Canada and America and quite a large number reached Hong Kong, Singapur, and Malaya and contributed greatly towards the development of these countries. After some years the Canadian and the American Governments put restrictions on the immigration of Indians. The Indians in Canada to safeguard their interests started a Society called *Khalsa Dewan Society* and also built a Gurdwara at Vancouver where the Indians met every now and then and discussed their problems. In 1910 the Canadian Government passed a Law debarring the Indians from entering Canada. Even the families of those who were already there were not allowed to enter Canada. Only those coming direct from India could land in Canada, but there being no direct steamer service between Canada and India, the Indians could not avail of this concession. The Indians strongly resented this attitude of the Canadian Government and represented to the Indian Government to redress the wrong. The Government of India sent one Mr. Hopkinson to help the Indians in Canada, but he, instead of helping the Indians, joined hands with Mr. Reed, the immigration officer and tried to create a split amongst the Indians. Bhai Bhagwan Singh the leader of the Indians was forcibly exiled but he managed to get down at Yokohama and along with Mr. Barkat Ullah went to America.

In order to help his countrymen in Canada, to have their families with them, Baba Gurdit Singh who was having a prosperous business in Malaya chartered a ship named "Kamagata Maru" to carry the Indians to Canada. With three hundred Indian passengers, the ship started from Singapur but when it reached Victoria it was surrounded by a battle-ship and under escort brought to Vancouver, but no one from the ship was allowed to land and the passengers were kept on board without food and water for many days. After one month the ship started for India and when it reached Budge Budge near Calcutta the military and the police, put a cordon round the passengers and with a view to arrest them asked them to enter a train bound for the Punjab. The passengers

expressed a desire to stay in Calcutta but the authorities would not listen. The passengers marched towards Calcutta. On this the police fired at them and according to the Government version thirty Indians lost their lives while the actual deaths far exceeded this. Baba Gurdit Singh the leader of the party escaped and remained so for years but finally at the advice of Mahatma Gandhi surrendered himself and was sentenced to five years. This incident and the other indignities from which the Indians in Canada and America had suffered coupled with the atmosphere of liberty prevailing in the two countries, set the Indians thinking. They attributed all their miseries, and humiliations to their slavery and they discussed freely in their Gurdwaras how to do away with the British domination. L. Hardayal and the other Indians in America and Canada started a political party named "Gadar Party" with the objects of having an armed revolution in India replacing the foreign Government by a Republican Government.

L. Hardayal and Bhai Parma Nand who were in America during this period guided the party. Branches all over America and Canada were established and it was decided to strike the British Government when the impending war started. Mr. Kartar Singh Sarabha, Pandit Jagat Ram Harianvi, Babu Tarak Nath Das, V. G. Pingley, Khan Khoji, and many other Indians placed their services at the disposal of L. Hardayal.

In California Baba Jawala Singh, Bhai Sobha Singh and Baba Rur Singh, took in hand the work of organizing the Gadar Party.

Representatives from different parts of America met at Sacraments the capital of California in June 1913. L. Hardayal called upon the Indians living abroad to unite and give a deadly blow to the British, for the liberation of the mother land. It was also resolved to start a paper called *Hindustan Gadar*. The first issue appeared on 1st November, 1913. L, Hardayal was its Editor. The paper strongly attacked the Anti-Indian Policy of the American and Canadian Governments. L. Hardayal was arrested on 25th March, 1914, but was released on a thousand dollar bail. Fearing that L. Hardayal may not be handed over to Government of India the Executive Committee of the Gaddar Party advised him to escape to Switzerland and he did so immediately.

The Gadar Party was only nine months old, and it had not been properly organized in Malaya, Singapur and other far east countries when the war started. There were no contacts of the party in India too because the Congress at that time did not countenance any forward or extremist movement and was out and out a moderate

organization. The Gadar Party believed in armed revolution. In spite of all these handicaps the Gadar Party decided to send Jathas from America and Canada to foment armed rising in India.

Hundreds of Indians, residing in America, offered themselves for this national cause. They left all their business and sailed for India on a Japanese ship named *Tosa Maru*, many more patriotic Indians joined the party from Japan and Shanghai. Pt. Parma Nand of Jhansi was one of them.

The Government of India knew before hand about the intention of these patriots and when the ship arrived in India a large number of them were arrested and awarded life sentences. Prominent amongst them were Master Udham Singh, Baba Jawala Singh, Baba Sohan Singh and Baba Kesar Singh. These patriots were totally ignorant of the conditions prevailing in India. They had expected that like the Indians abroad the Indians in India would all be ready for armed revolt so they preached it.

To begin with Punjab, Bengal and Burma were selected for this purpose. Indian Army was their main sphere of activity and the masses were not touched.

The members of the Gadar Party were successful in winning a number of Regiments to their side, and a date was fixed for the rising, but the Government came to know of this before hand, and all the prominent leaders of the Gadar Party were arrested before the fixed date and tried on various charges.

The Indian Regiments in the four provinces had to revolt the moment there was any uprising of the civil population. February 22, 1915, was the date fixed for the uprising, but due to the treachery of one Kirpal Singh who was a member of the Central Committee of the Gadar Party and was also working as a spy of the Government, the Government came to know of it. The Government raided several places in the Punjab before the due date and arrested almost all the prominent members of the Gadar Party. Kirpal Singh was given rupees thirty thousand in cash and five squares of land for this betrayal. Nawab Khan was the other man who betrayed the party. The arrested persons were tried in different conspiracy cases. In the first Lahore Conspiracy Case there were 66 accused including Bhai Parma Nand. The following were sentenced to death:

1. Sardar Kartar Singh Sarabha.
2. Mr. Vishnu Ganesh Pingley.
3. S. Jaswant Singh.
4. S. Sewa Singh.

5. S. Bir Singh and S. Surain Singh. The rest were sentenced from 10 years to life imprisonment. L. Kidar Nath Sehgal was acquitted.

Baba Sohan Singh Bhakna, S. Jawala Singh, Babar, Kesar Singh and Master Udham Singh were sentenced to life imprisonment, in spite of the fact that they were arrested from the ship and never landed on the Indian soil.

In this case Amar Singh of Nawanshahr, Mula Singh of Meran Kot, became approvers. Nawab Khan was already there as a police spy! S. Kartar Singh Sarabha, was one of those who were sentenced to death was a youngman of eighteen years. He was studying in America and joined the Gadar Party there. On being questioned by the court he frankly declared. "I stand for armed revolution in India and have come here for this purpose from America." He admitted all charges and said that he would find himself very fortunate if he was sentenced to death because according to the theory of reincarnation he would like to be reborn in India to work for her freedom. He was warned by the Judge about the consequences of such a statement but he repeated his request. The Judge did not record his statement, and adjourned the case. The next day he in spite of all pursuasions stuck to his statement. He was sentenced to death and hanged. At the gallows he kissed the rope and said: "I pray that I be born again and again in India and die such a death till India is free." Sardar Chanda Singh, who helped the Government in the arrest of Bhai Peara Singh a prominent member of the Gadar Party, was murdered in his house for betrayal.

Bhai Banta Singh, Bhai Uttam Singh, Bhai Buta Singh and Bhai Jawand Singh were executed for this murder.

Bhai Balwant Singh who was working in Siam on behalf of the Gadar Party was arrested there, and brought to India, tried, and sentenced to death though he had done nothing in India. In the other conspiracy case seven more were hanged including Pandit Kanshi Ram, Sardar Bakshish Singh and S. Jiwan Singh.

SIAM

It is an independent kingdom on the border of Burma and was the other centre of Revolutionary activity. S. Harnam Singh, Pandit Sohan Lal and Baba Amar Singh, who were the ring leaders, were arrested, brought to Burma and tried. Pandit Sohan Lal and S. Harnam Singh were sentenced to death and hanged. Baba Amar Singh got life sentence.

The Gadar Party sent its representatives to Singapore also. They brought the Indian regiments under their control and captured the fort. The revolutionaries fought bravely for three weeks against the British forces, but the fort was beseiged by the British, French and the Japanese. They outnumbered the revolutionaries and overpowered them.

S. Ishar Singh and Mr. Ahmad Khan were sentenced to death and a large number got life sentences.

The Gadar Party apart from sending jathas to India and workers to Siam, Burma and Singapore carried on its work in America and sent their representatives to collaborate with the revolutionaries in Europe, and with all those who were fighting against the British. After Hardayal's departure Pt. Ram Chander carried on the work of the party in America. He was later on joined by Maulvi Barkat Ullah and S. Bhagwan Singh from Japan where they had been working against the English. Maulvi Barkat Ullah's name deserves a special mention for his services to the country. He was a native of Bhopal. After graduating from India he left for England for higher studies in 1908. In England he came under the influence of Mr. Krishnaji Varma and joined the revolutionary party. After some years' stay in England he left for New York and there contributed articles in favour of India's freedom.

Through the influence of Krishnaji Varma he became a Professor of Arabic at the Tokyo University and there too he carried on propaganda on behalf of India's freedom and made many friends. After five years' stay in Japan he along with Bhagwan Singh left for America and joined the Gadar Party there.

EUROPE

During the period under review quite a large number of Indian students had joined the European Universities. The racial arrogance of the English, the colour bar and a number of other factors including their contact with the revolutionary exiles of other countries created an urge in their minds to work for the freedom of their country. A number of secret societies were started to publish literature on behalf of Indian independence movement. This literature was distributed in different countries. Krishnaji Varma was the founder of the secret society in England. He organized the Indian students in England and also published good many pamphlets for India. He was soon joined by Madam Cama a Parsee lady from India, Ranaji of Jam Nagar State and Mr. V. D. Savarkar. Krishnaji Varma started a journal, *Indian Sociology* to further the aims of the society.

The India Office in London, could not approve of the activities of the Indian students, therefore, to watch their activities an office with Sir Curzon Wyllie as its head was opened. No Indian student could join any university in England without the recommendation of that office. Curzon Wyllie used to spy on the Indian students and report their activities to the Government and to their parents with the result that a number of students were called back to India in the midst of their studies. Mr. V.D. Savarkar published his book *War of Independence* while in London. In 1907 Mr. Madan Lal Dhingra, a student from Amritsar shot dead Curzon Wyllie for spying over the Indian students. Mr Dhingra was hanged for this patriotic act. Krishnaji Varma, Madam Cama, Ranaji and Mr. V. D. Savarkar were also wanted in this murder but the first three fled to France. Only Mr. Savarkar was arrested. Having no solid proof against Mr. Savarkar the British decided to send him to India to be tried there. Mr. Savarkar while in the ship bound for India managed to jump into the sea from the bath room. Swam three miles and reached the shores of France. He was arrested by the watchman and handed over to the British Police against the provisions of the International Law Mr. Savarkar was tried in India and sentenced to sixty years imprisonment!

In France Madam Cama started an English paper, fearlessly advocating the cause of Indian freedom, and very soon became popular. The publication of the paper was stopped when France entered war. Madame Cama was interned in her house in Paris during the war. She died in France in 1927. Shyamji Krishna Varma continued his paper *Indian Sociology* from Paris but when France joined the Great War, he fled to Switzerland and the paper had to stop its publication. Krishnaji Varma died in Switzerland in 1926. Ranaji was kept in detention by the French Government during the war period.

S. Ajit Singh and Sufi Amba Pershad who had been carrying an incessant propaganda for Indian freedom, left India and reached Iran. From Iran, S. Ajit Singh reached Europe while Sufi Amba Pershad was arrested by the Iran Government but he committed suicide in prison. From Europe, Sardar Ajit Singh went to Brazil during the war and carried on his work there.

GERMANY

When the Great War started a revolutionary party with Mr. Bhupindra Nath Dutta and Mr. Chattopadhya as its leaders was started in Berlin. Mr. Bhupindra Nath Dutta was in New

York for studies, where he came in contact with Mr. Chakravarti who was working in New York on behalf of the Gadar Party, and through his influence he joined the party and was sent to Berlin by the German Ambassador in America, Mr. Chattopadhya who was in England for studies also left for Berlin at the outbreak of the war and came into contact with Bhupindra Nath Dutt. The work of the Indian revolutionary party in Germany became very extensive and to cope with it the Gadar Party in America sent Mr. Dalip Singh Gill, Rishi Kesh, Amin Chand, Karta Ram, Pearey Lal Varma, Khan Khoji, and Shiv Dev Singh to Germany. In 1915 Maulvi Barkat Ullah was sent to Germany as a representative of the Gadar Party. Bhai Bhagwan Singh was sent to Siam on behalf of the Gadar Party. Raja Mahindra Partap who was in Switzerland also reached Berlin and joined the revolutionary party. The German Government recognized the representative character of the revolutionary party and gave good financial support to it.

About the end of 1915 the German Government sent a Mission to Afghanistan to get the support of the Afghan Government against the British and also with a view to make Afghanistan the headquarters to foment rebellion in India. Maulvi Barkat Ullah, Raja Mahindra Pratap, Mr. Kasim Bey, three Germans and nine Afridis who had escaped from the British Army were the members of this deputation. The Mission was very cordially received on arrival at Herat and was welcomed on the way to Kabul.

In Kabul Mr. Obeidullah Sindhi joined the party.

The Afghan Government played a double role and thereby received large sums from the British Government. The Indian members started a branch of the Indian National Congress in Kabul and also formed a provisional Government with Raja Mahindra Pratap, Maulvi Barkat Ullah, Mr. Mohammad Ali and Obeidullah Sindhi as its members. The Mission stayed in Kabul for full one year, but failed to achieve its purpose due to the dual policy of Afghan Government. The German and Turkish members of the Mission went back while Maulvi Barkat Ullah and Raja Mahindra Pratap stayed in Kabul. At the end of the War, Raja Mahindra Pratap went to Germany and Maulvi Barkat Ullah went to Moscow in 1919.

With the termination of the War the Indian revolutionary party in Berlin was dissolved and at the invitation of Soviet Deputy Counsel in Germany, a Society named *Hindi Sabha* was formed in its stead at Berlin. Raja Mahindra Partap, Dalip Singh Gill, Doctor Mansur, Mr. Chattopadhya, Pearey Lal Varma,

Chaudhri Karta Ram, Rishi Kesh Lathe, Lala Amin Chand and Sardar Shiv Dev Singh were the prominent members of this Society.

Maulvi Barkat Ullah had already arrived in Moscow and Dalip Singh Gill from Germany was deputed to reach Moscow to chalk out a programme for India's independence in consultation with Maulvi Barkat Ullah.

As a result of the talks with Mr. Lenin and other Soviet officers, the head office of the Hindi Sabha was shifted to Moscow and the important members of the Sabha reached there. One million dollars were advanced to the Hindi Sabha by the Russian Government to carry on the propaganda for the Indian Independence.

Mr. Anwar Pasha and Jamal Pasha, two Turkish Ministers who had come from Turkey at the end of the war, also joined the Hindi Sabha.

Maulvi Barkat Ullah and Jamal Pasha were sent to Afghanistan to work for Indian Independence. Raja Mahindra Pratap and Maulvi Abdul Rabb had already reached Afghanistan on behalf of Hindi Sabha. Maulana Obeidullah Sindhi was already in Kabul where he had formed a branch of Indian National Congress.

After some time the Hindi Sabha became unpopular with the Russian Government due to the part played by Anwar Pasha in the revolt in Russian Turkistan. The Russian Government withdrew its support and so the Sabha was dissolved and its members went back to Europe. Only Maulvi Barkat Ullah stayed behind.

During the same time the Hijrat Movement had started in India and many Mohammedans reached Afghanistan and Russian frontier. For their training in Marxism a University was established at Tashkand but due to the pressure of Ramsay MacDonald this University was abolished and all its students were transferred to Eastern University of Moscow.

CHAPTER XVIII

Congress Year By Year—(*Contd.*)

THIRTY-FOURTH SESSION

THIS session was held at Amritsar in 1919 under the Presidentship of Pandit Moti Lal Nehru.

This session was unique in view of the circumstances in which it was held. This session was invited by Amritsar Nationalists at the Delhi Session in 1918. Those who had invited the session were deprived of their liberty. Murders, massacres, tyrannies and tortures, sorrows and sufferings, depression, suppression and repression, agony and anguish, misery and affliction, grief and sadness were writ on the walls of Amritsar, on every face, on every particle of dust of that sacred city. It appeared almost an impossibility that the Congress Session could be held there. It was nothing short of a miracle, and a marvel, and all this is due to the efforts of Swami Shradha Nand Ji, the Chairman, and Lala Girdhari Lal, the General Secretary of the Reception Committe. The Amritsar city in particular very generously and very lavishly supported the Reception Committee. Almost to a man the people spared neither money nor energy to make the session a success. It would have been impossible to hold the session if these gentlemen who wielded considerable influence in the province had not electrified the town. The presence of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya who was literally the saviour of Amritsar and Punjab, and of Pandit Moti Lal Nehru whose commanding personality and whose forensic skill were more than a match for the bureaucracy had considerably heartened the people who were very much cowed down. Sir Michael had left the province and Sir Maclagan, who had been installed in his *gaddi*, had a different outlook from his predecessor, but the other officials had not learnt any

lesson and they were as insolent and offensive as usual, and they were anxious to make it impossible for the nationalists to hold the Congress Session at Amritsar.

Later on other All-India leaders came to the Punjab and straightened the back of the Punjab which had been bent by the bureaucracy. Mahtama Gandhi's presence in Amritsar created fresh hopes and new expectations and a curtain was drawn over the tragic episode, and once again there was bustle and life, there were scenes of excitement, and the town hummed with energy and activity. The session was a success from every point of view. Provincial leaders were released on the eve of the session. This created further interest in this session. Maulana Mohammad Ali and Shaukat Ali, and above all, Lokmanya Tilak attended this session. People were mad with joy. Their hearts were full of delight.

To find all these brilliant leaders of public life in their midst, peoples' enthusiasm knew no bounds and the whole town acted as the Reception Committee. Processions were organized on a very grand scale. Provincial leaders had a very enthusiastic reception. Ram Naumi scenes were once again witnessed.

Pandit Moti Lal, an eminent lawyer, a Congressman of forward views, a staunch supporter of self-determination, the President-elect of this session richly and amply deserved this honour, not only because of his distinguished and long record of services rendered to his motherland but because to him belongs the glory of helping the Punjab to regain its self-respect. He inspired the down-hearted, he offered solace to the bereaved, he did all he could to revive the manly spirit of the Punjabees, who were down-hearted, depressed and distressed. He and Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya can share the glory and honour of bringing to life a province that was made to grovel in dust by the bureaucrats.

We reproduce a few extracts from his presidential address which was a masterly criticism of the misdeeds of Punjab officials. He gave them something really hot and pungent. He gave a message of hope and cheer to his countrymen in general and to the people of Punjab in particular.

Extracts from the Presidential address of Pandit Moti Lal Nehru :

"What is our ultimate goal? We want freedom of thought, freedom of action, freedom to fashion our own destiny and build up an India suited to the genius of her people. We do not wish to

make India a cheap and slavish imitation of the West. The Western democracy has not proved a panacea of all ills. It has not solved the problems around us. It may be, that when we get the power to mould our institutions we shall evolve a system of Government which will blend all that is best in the East and the West. We must aim at an India where all are free and have fullest opportunities of development, where women have ceased to be in bondage, and the rigours of the caste system have disappeared, where there are no privileged classes, or communities, where education is free and open to all, where the capitalist and the landlord do not oppress the labourer and the ryot, where labour is respected and is well paid, and poverty the curse of the present generation is a thing of the past. Life will then be worth living in this country, it will be inspired by joy and hope and the terrible misery we see around us will become a bed dream which has faded away from our memory on our awakening to welcome the morning sun.

"But that day is yet distant; we have still a difficult path full of obstacles and pitfalls before us. Let us march ahead with truth as our guide and courage our watchword, and before long we shall reach the promised land."

Resolutions.

Mr. C. R. Dass moved these resolutions :

"That this Congress reiterates its declaration of last year that India is fit for full responsible Government and repudiates all assumptions and assertions to the contrary.

"That the Congress adheres to the resolution passed at Delhi Congress regarding constitutional reforms and is of opinion that the Reforms Act is inadequate, unsatisfactory and disappointing. The Congress further urges that the Parliament should take early steps to establish full responsible Government in India in accordance with the principles of Self-Determination,"

Mahatma Gandhi moved an amendment omitting the word "disappointing" and adding a further paragraph, "Pending such introdcuction this Congress begs loyally to respond to the sentiments in the Royal Proclamation namely, "Let the new era begin with a common determination among my people and my officers to work together for a common purpose" and trusts that both the authorities and people will co-operate so as to work the Reforms to secure the early establishment of a Responsible Government.

"And the Congress offers its warmest thanks to

Mr. Montague for his labours in connection with them—in the final form the resolution embodies the original resolution of Mr. Dass with the replacement of Gandhiji's extra paragraph by the following:

" Pending such introduction this Congress trusts, so far as may be possible, that people will so work the Reforms as to secure an early establishment of full Responsible Government, and this Congress offers its thanks to Mr. Montague for his labours in connection with Reforms." This resolution was passed. Another important resolution was :

" While fully recognising the grave provocation that led to a sudden outburst of mob frenzy, expressed the deep regret of the Congress and its condemnation of the excesses committed in certain parts of the Punjab and Gujrat resulting in loss of life and injury to person and property during April last."

Gandhiji made a very marvellous speech. He said : " There is no greater Resolution before this Congress than this one.

"There was violence on our part intended and committed. The Government went mad at the time. We went mad also at the time. I say don't return madness with madness but return madness with sanity and the whole situation will be yours."

A resolution offering welcome to the Prince of Wales was passed.

A resolution for the recall of Lord Chelmsford was passed. It was opposed by Mr. B. N. Sarma who was rewarded handsomely by being appointed as a member of the Viceroy's Executive Council.

SPECIAL SESSION

A special session of the Congress was held in Calcutta from the 4th to 9th September, 1920. Lala Lajpat Rai presided.

In a very exhaustive manner he dealt with the Punjab wrongs. He charged Sir Michael O'Dwyer for all the atrocities and brutalities that had been inflicted on the Punjab and strongly and emphatically condemned, in a very forceful language, his and his subordinates' misdeeds which had transgressed all bounds of decency, which were extremely cruel, barbarous and humiliating. He said : "I believe in a righteous and stern and unyielding struggle. I am quite prepared for defeats and repulses. The political principles which I believe in very strongly, are, that nations are by themselves made, it is righteousness that exalted a nation. My humble advice to you is to maintain 'a dignified form and reasonable

attitude amidst difficulties and storms, and to continue the struggle in the light of experience gained."

Resolutions.

The Congress placed on record the deepest sorrow of the Congress at the death of Bal Gangadhar Tilak whose stainless life, services and sufferings for the welfare of the people, whose arduous endeavours in the fight for National Autonomy would enshrine his memory in the grateful recollection of our people and would be a source of strength and inspiration to countless generations of our countrymen. In another resolution the members of the Punjab Enquiry Committee were thanked for the great industry and judicial care with which they had collected the evidence and written their report.

It expressed its deep and bitter disappointment at the drift, tone and tendency of final conclusions of the majority report of the Hunter Committee. It was tainted by bias and race prejudice and therefore it was unacceptable and its findings were unjustifiable.

It condemned the Government of India's review of the two reports of the Hunter Committee and opined that the action proposed to be taken in review with reference to the conduct of guilty officials was grossly and utterly inadequate and had shaken all confidence in the fairness of British justice.

The main resolution, however, was moved by Gandhiji. It was carried by an overwhelming majority. After mentioning the Khilafat question and Punjab wrongs it stated that the only effectual means to redress both of these wrongs, and to vindicate national honour and to prevent a repetition of similar wrongs in future, was to establish Swarajya. The Congress expressed its opinion that there was no course left open for the people of India, but to approve of and adopt the policy of progressive non-violent non-co-operation inaugurated by Mahatma Gandhi until the said wrongs were righted and Swarajya was established. It advised people to surrender their titles and honorary offices and to resign nominated seats in Local bodies, to refuse to attend Government levees and durbars, to withdraw children from schools and colleges owned, aided or controlled by the Government and to advise litigants and lawyers to boycott British courts, to boycott Councils and foreign goods. This Congress advised adoption of Swadeshi in piece-goods on a vast scale and advised immediate stimulation of further manufacture on a large scale by means of reviving hand-spinning in every house and hand-weaving on the part of the millions of weavers.

This resolution was hotly contested and after a long and serious debate was passed. All amendments were rejected. Maulana Shaukat Ali and Mohammad Ali and Pt. Motilal supported the resolution. Mr. C. R. Dass and other leaders of Bengal, Mr. Khaparde and other leaders of Maharashtra vehemently opposed the resolution. Lala Lajpat Rai was definitely against the resolution and tried his best that the resolution be thrown out.

THIRTY-FIFTH SESSION

This was held at Nagpur in 1920 under the presidentship of Mr. C. Vijayraghavachariar.

He said: " The political situation in which we find ourselves is grave and complicated beyond our expectations and conception.

" We have to send this message to our sovereign that the people of India are now placed by their rulers in an intolerable position and that they are determined forthwith to make their beautiful country fit and safe for her sons and daughters to live in, and that any further delay in their achievement of this vital object means ruin to them and peril to the Empire if not to the future peace of the world. I would make an earnest appeal to you to realise that the crisis has now reached its worst and this session may be rightly termed to be the Thermopley in the history of India, certainly in the history of Indian National Congress. I venture to think that our fate just now lies chiefly in the hands of two, men the Rt. Hon'ble Mr. Montague and Mahatmaji."

This session was a great success. 1,582 delegrates of whom no less than 1,050 were Muslims participated in this session. Col. Wedgwood, Mr. M. P. Hotford Knight and Mr. Ben Spoor attended the Congress as fraternal delegates from the Labour Party of England and conveyed the Labour Party's greetings and sympathy.

This session was a personal triumph for Gandhiji and here he obtained much greater support from All-India leaders than at Calcutta. C. R. Dass and Lajpat Rai fell in line with him and instead of being his opponents became his loyal adherents.

The non-co-operation resolution of Calcutta was re-affirmed at Nagpur. It urged the Congress to organise the Indian National service and promote the All-India Tilak Memorial Fund and Swarajya Fund. It asked the nation to fully and earnestly carry out the boycott of foreign goods, law courts, councils and colleges, etc. The country was asked to refrain from taking part in functions or festivals in honour of Duke of Cannaught. The renewal of repression in the Punjab, Delhi and elsewhere was condemned

and the people were requested to bear it with fortitude. The Congress requested all sovereign Princes to take immediate steps to establish full responsible Governments in the states. The policy of the Government in not cancelling the orders of deportation of Mr. Horniman was condemned and India's gratitude was expressed to him. The creed of the Congress was changed. Its object was declared to be attainment of Swaraj by peaceful means. A Working Committee of the All-India Congress Committee composed of 15 members including the office-bearers, was to carry on the day-to-day work of the Congress.

Gandhiji's presence in the province after it had been severely wounded and crushed gave a heart to the people. He was for a total rejection of the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms and it was with a considerable difficulty that a compromise resolution was agreed upon. It is interesting that at this session Mahatmaji insisted on acceptance of Reforms and Mr. Dass opposed it and at Calcutta Mahatmaji sponsosred non-co-operation and Deshbandhu did not find himself ready to accept the programme of Triple Boycott.

Gandhji writes : "I record with grateful pride that among all the loyal colleagues I had the previlege of being associated with. none was more loyal than C. R. Dass. At the Amritsar Congress I had a rare time between Lokmanya and Deshbandhu.

" I was convinced of Deshbandhu's greatness and unquestioned leadership, firmness in action, reasonableness in judgment and loyalty to the party.

" He used often to claim spirituality and used to say that he had no difference with me in religion. He was deeply religious. He was not merely great, but he was good and growing in goodness. Deshbandu's withdrawal leaves me in a worse plight than I was, when cruel fate snatched away Lokmanya from me and my country."

THIRTY-SIXTH SESSION

This session was held at Ahmedabad in 1921. Mr. C. R. Dass was to preside but before the session met he was arrested and put behind the bars. Hakim Ajmal Khan took his place.

Hakim Ajmal Khan was an illustrious leader of this country. He took active interest in the Khilafat and Congress movements. It was due to his efforts that Hindus and Mohammedans fraternised at Delhi and it was he who by his influence got cow slaughter stopped on Bakar Id. It was he who invited Swam Shradhanand to make a speech in the Juma Masjid and what

an irony of fate that Swamiji was done to death by a Mohammedan fanatic.

Hakim Ajmal Khan was a man of very sober and clear views and his influence on the political activities of India was very helpful, wholesome and useful. He was a highly polished, cultivated gentleman and he occupied a very high position not only in his profession but in intellectual, social and cultural spheres.

He delivered his address in Urdu: "It is a matter of deepest regret to all of us that Mr. C.R. Dass is not with us to guide our deliberations to-day. It is superfluous for me to enumerate the national services of that great patriot of Bengal. It should be a matter of deepest satisfaction to us all both because the man whom the nation had chosen as its chief representative has by his undaunted courage, splendid, self-sacrifice and spirit of cheerful suffering, proved himself worthy of the great honour conferred on him, and he has done greater service to his country by this arrest than he would probably have done by presiding over our deliberations to-day, because the event has infused greater spirit and determination into the hearts of national workers and galvanised the entire country to greater activities and sacrifice. The spirit of non-co-operation pervades throughout the country and there is not a true Indian heart even in the remotest corner of this great country which is not filled with the spirit of cheerful suffering and sacrifice to attain Swaraj and see the Punjab and Khilafat wrongs redressed.

"We are not in a mood to accord the Prince of Wales a cordial welcome so long as the two sores of Khilafat and Punjab wrongs are still running and Swaraj is still unattained. Our country is experiencing terrible convulsions but it requires no prophet to foretell that these are the birth pangs of young India, that will revive the glorious traditions of our ancient country to take its proper place by the nations of the world."

The main resolution was a thesis on non-co-operation. It was a very lengthy resolution. It was absolutely the natural result of the National activities during the past fifteen months. The resolution did not close the doors of co-operation if the Viceroy would hold a conference where only equals were to sit and where there was not to be a single begger.

That resolution was not an arrogant challenge to anybody. It was a challenge to the authority, that was enthroned in arrogance.

The Congress expected that every person of the age of 18 and over would immediately join the volunteer organizations,

The Congress appointed Mahatma Gandhi as the sole executive authority and invested him with the full powers of the All-India Congress and conferred the same powers on his successors in case of his being arrested. The Congress appealed to those who did not believe in non-co-operation to render full assistance to the nation in the promotion of unity between different religious communities, and to popularise carding, hand-spinning and hand-weaving from its economical aspect and as a cottage industry necessary; moreover, to supplement resources of millions of agriculturists who were living on the brink of starvation, to help the cause of prohibition, to bring about removal of untouchability and to help the improvement of the conditions of submerged classes.

Maulana Hasrat Mohani proposed to define Swaraj in the creed as Complete Independence, free from all foreign content. Gandhiji opposed this idea and said: "The levity with which the proposition has been taken by some of you has grieved me because it shows lack of responsibility. As responsible men and women we should go back to Calcutta and Nagpur." The proposition was thrown out and very soon after Maulana Hasrat had to pay a heavy penalty for his courage of convictions. He was sentenced to 3 years' R. I. This session was held in a true Indian fashion. There were no chairs. This curtailed the expenses and considerably enhanced the dignity of the Congress. One notable feature was that the Muslim Divines were participating in the deliberations. The following are few passages from Mr. C. R. Dass's undelivered address:

"Measures for showing political life have been taken in order to coerce the people to receive the Prince of Wales but it is the imprisoned soul of Calcutta that will greet His Royal Highness.

"We are out to secure freedom, freedom from foreign subjection, and freedom from foreign interference. Freedom is that state, that condition, which makes it possible for a nation to realise its own individuality and to evolve its own destiny. We claim the right to develop our own individuality and evolve our own destiny along our own lines unembarrassed by what the western civilization has to teach us and unhampered by the institutions which the West has imposed on us. Once a nation passes into subjection, degeneration must inevitably set in attacking the very life-blood of the nation. The destruction of our national industry—the spinning and weaving industry—has been planned. I object to the perpetuation of British domination as in my opinion it is impossible to find the fulfilments of our

nationality, our individuality, our personality, so long as that domination continues.

"I cannot accept the fundamental principle on which the Reform Act is based. Freedom is inherent in every nation, and India has and possesses the right to develop her own individuality, and to evolve her own destiny unhampered by what the British Parliament has decided or may decide for us. Any power that hampers or embarrasses the attainment of this aim is an enemy of India and must as such be resisted.

"Freedom is my birth right and I demand a recognition of that right not by instalments nor in compartments but whole and entire. Doctrine of non-co-operation in form is one of negation but in substance it is one of affirmation; we break in order to build, we destroy in order to construct, we reject in order to accept.

"We are in no mood to take part in any rejoicings. It would be sheer hypocrisy on our part to extend a national welcome to the ambassador of a power that would deny us our elementary rights."

THIRTY-SEVENTH SESSION

This was held at Gaya in 1922. It was presided over by Mr. C. R. Dass. He declared:

"The development of nationality is a sacred task and anything which impedes that task is an obstacle which the very force and power of nationality must overcome. I am not against the boycott of Councils. I am simply of opinion that the system of the Reformed Councils with their steel-frame of the Indian Civil Service are absolutely unsuited to India. These Councils must be mended or ended. The boycott of these Councils means that such steps be taken that these Councils may not be there to impede the progress of Swaraj. There is no royal road to Freedom and difficult and dark will be the path leading to it. Anger is not for you, hatred is not for you. For you is the hope of dawn and the confidence of the morning."

Resolutions:

The Gaya Congress of 1922 was in every sense a remarkable one. The fight at Gaya was really a tripartite one, between those that raised politics to a spiritual level and those that worked politics on the intellectual and the material plan.

The question which caused the greatest excitement and

difference among delegates was the question of entry into Councils. There was one wing which believed strongly that the scheme of non-co-operation would be upset if entry into Councils was permitted and there were those politicians who would sweep the Councils and make a short work of cabinets and ministers, who fight the enemy with his own weapons and in his own den.

Srinivas Iyengar and Pandit Motilal Nehru supported the latter view. The general sentiment was against the proposition of lifting the ban on Councils entry specially at a moment when Gandhiji could not give his advice—he being in jail this proposition was therefore not accepted. The boycott of councils was confirmed and emphatically re-affirmed. A handsome tribute was paid to Gandhiji and his principles. The matchless bravery of the Akali martyrs and the noble example of non-violence set by them as well as other political prisoners was admired.

THIRTY-EIGHTH SESSION

This session was held at Cocanada in 1923. Maulana Mohammad Ali presided.

Resolutions :

1. This Congress re-affirms the non-co-operation resolutions adopted at Calcutta, Nagpur, Ahmedabad, Gaya and Delhi

"Since doubts have been raised by reason of the non-co-operation adopted at Delhi with regard to Council entry whether there has been any change in the policy of the Congrsrs this Congress affirms that the principles and policy of that boycott remain unaltered. This Congress further declares that the said principle and policy form the foundation of constructive work and appeals to the nation, to carry out the programme of constructive work as adopted at Bardoli and prepare for adoption of civil disobedience. The Congress further calls upon every Provincial Congress Committee to take immediate steps in this behalf with a view to speedy attainment of our goal."

That the non-co-operation would be effective as much from inside the Councils as from outside was the interpretation put by pro-changers. The National pact that was prepared was to be circulated along with Bengal pact prepared by Deshbandhu Dass.

The Congress welcomed the movement for the formation of an All-India Volunteer Organization. A scheme of separate Congress departments was to be prepared along with a scheme of a

National Service of paid workers for the various departments. Shrimati Sarojini Naidu and Mr. George Joseph were deputed as delegates to the Kenya Indian Congress.

The All-India Khaddar Board was formed with power to organize Khadi Work.

The Congress resolved to stand by the Sikhs in their present struggle and render all possible assistance including men and money.

THIRTY-NINTH SESSION

This session was held at Belgaum in 1924 under the presidentship of Mahatma Gandhi. The following are some of the extracts from his address:

" From the September of 1920 the Congress has been principally an institute for developing strength from within. It has ceased to function by means of resolutions addressed to the Government for redress of grievances. It did so because it ceased to believe in the beneficial character of the existing system of Government.

" In my humble opinion non-violent non-co-operation as a means of attaining political freedom has come to stay, and that even its partial success has brought us nearer Swaraj. There is no mistaking the fact that the capacity for suffering for the sake of a cause must advance it. I contend that non-violent acts exert pressure far more effective than violent acts, for that pressure comes from good-will and gentleness.

" Boycott of foreign cloth exerts such a pressure. Foreign cloth is our largest import. It is the one thing more than any other that has ruined the Indian peasant and imposed partial idleness upon him.

Boycott of foreign cloth is, therefore, a necessity if he is to live. This boycott by means of hand-spinning and hand-weaving, *viz.*, Khaddar, not only saves the peasant's money, but it enables us workers, to render social service of a first class order. It is calculated that it will bring about a political result of the first magnitude. That economics is untrue which ignores or disregards moral basis. My ambition is nothing less than to see international relations placed on a moral basis through India's efforts.

"I have no better or other message than that of spinning wheel for the nation. I know no other effective method for the attainment of Swaraj if it is to be by peaceful and legitimate

means. It is the only substitute for violence, that can be accepted by the whole nation. I swear by Civil Disobedience. The unity conference at Delhi has paved the way for a settlement of religious differences. The Committee of The All-Parties Conference is among the things expected to find a workable and a just solution of the political differences not only between the Hindus and Mussalmans but between all classes and all castes, sex or denominations. Our goal must be removal, at the earliest possible moment, of communal or sectional representation. The majorities must set the example of self-sacrifice.

"Untouchability is another hindrance to Swaraj. Its removal is just as essential for Swaraj as the attainment of Hindu-Muslim Unity. Hindus cannot claim or take Swaraj till they have restored the liberty of suppressed classes. They have sunk with the latter's suppression.

"I would strive for Swaraj within the Empire but would not hesitate to sever connections if severance became a necessity through Britain's own fault.

"The Swaraj Party represents, if not a majority, at least a strong and growing minority in the Congress.

"The Congress, therefore, to be worthy of its trust, must devise a sanction to back its demands. Before we can forge the sanction we Hindus, Mussalmans, Christians, Sikhs, Parsis, etc., must unite and so should Swarajists, no-changers, Liberals, Home Rulers, Muslim Leaguers and others. If we can but speak with a united voice and know our own mind it would be well."

Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Motilal and Mr. Das had a full and free discussion regarding the future line of action of the Congress. They were anxious to find a formula which would bridge the gulf between the pro-changers and no-changers. The Swarajists wanted to convert Mahatmaji to their views.

Mahatma Gandhi issued a statement in which he said: "During the state of probation I should advise the no-changers, not to worry about what Swarajists are doing or saying. The latter have declared their faith in the constructive programme, but their contention is that by itself the constructive programme cannot enable the country, to reach the goal. In the prosecution, however, of the constructive programme outside the legislatures all the no-changers, pro-changers and others can, if they will, work in union through their respective organisations if necessary. Mr. C. R. Dass and Pandit Motilal Nehru also issued a statement: "We are anxious to end the fruitless verbal discussion making it

clear that Council-entry is and can be thoroughly consistent with the principle of non-co-operation as we understand that principle to be.

"We will give our wholehearted support to the constructive programme of Mahatma Gandhi, and will work that programme unitedly through Congress organisations.

There is an abiding and fundamental unity amongst both parties of Congress. Both feel the necessity of working the constructive programme whether within or outside the legislative bodies. Our joint efforts in the same or different directions will furnish a fitting answer to the bureaucracy unwilling to recognise the rights and liberties of the Indian people, and we emphatically assert that in our determination to work for the same object, in the same or different spheres, as expressed by the determination of the Indian Nation to bring the struggle for Swaraj to a successful issue."

In the history of non-co-operation, Belgaum is a landmark. The Congress stood at the parting of ways.

Resolutions:

1. The agreement between Gandhiji, Nehru and Dass which was passed by A.-I. C. C. in November 1924 was ratified.

2. Congress franchise was altered. All members of elected Congress organizations were required to send in 2,000 yards of even and well-twisted self-spun yarn every month.

3. The exodus of Hindus from Kohat was deplored and the Muslim residents of Kohat were exhorted to assure their Hindu brethren full protection of life and property.

4. Untouchability and Vaikam Satyagraha were dwelt upon.

5. Paid national service was declared to be honourable.

6. Shrimati Sarojini, Mr. Vase and Mr. Benarsi Dass Chaturvedi's services on behalf of Indians abroad were appreciated.

FORTIETH SESSION

This session was held at Cawnpore in 1925. Shrimati Sarojini Naidu presided. She said:

"You having elected me, at so grave an hour, of the nation's history, have done something that throughout centuries may serve to redeem for one moment the shame and degradation of your fallen manhood, in giving to a mere woman, the woman who for years and years, rocked the cradle and sung lullaby to that national

standard which is the emblem of your own regeneration, you have gone back to the earliest inspiration that built your civilization and admitted the woman a co-sharer and a comrade in the secular and spiritual evolution of a people. I, weak and unworthy though be, am of that spiritual descent that has for mothers the purity of Sita, the courage of Savitri and faith of Damyanti and having this for ancestry the meanest woman becomes consecrated, perhaps by traditions to serve and succour her land.

"Where shall I find the language, where shall I find that living-fire that shall kindle in your hearts an undying fire? How shall I stir your hearts! How shall I light that flame that cannot die so that your slavery, so that your disunion, so that all the things that make you hungry and naked and forlorn, oppressed and battered shall be burnt in that undying fire?

The work of the Congress is the attainment of Swarajya. Congress is divided today. Though united it has two wings. We need today some transcendent miracle of intrepid and enduring statesmanship to enable us to remobilise, reconcile and discipline our scattered and demoralised agencies to a supreme unanimous effort. How shall a single party give battle to the powerful bureaucracy? Today is it not the duty of the liberals, the constitutionalists or independents no matter what be the particular label they attach to their names, no matter what be their shibboleths to return to the Congress? Shall they not come to the common field of battle and united and firm say to the bureaucracy?

We shall not serve you any longer, we shall not any longer suffer the insults and insolence of the bureaucracy's challenge to our manhood. We must stand together to fight for our rights and we shall not be deprived of our rights an hour longer and we must have our rights which belong to us.'

"I am not afraid of the ultimate sacrifice. I am only a woman but I am the standard-bearer of your honour, and I will see to it—the women of India will see to it that you men shall no more betray the heritage of our nation. The Indian woman calls, 'Oh my man! stand up and say what is manhood but sacrifice what is life except to die that our children may be reborn in their heritage of freedom. And if men falter as they have done through centuries, go to your homes and let me a mere woman go to the world and say, 'Mother rise. We redeem you from bondage, rise from the nightmare of slavery.' Shall it be left to the women to say that thy sons were faithless but daughters have saved thee.'

"In the battle for liberty fear is the one unforgivable treachery and despair the one unforgivable sin."

Resolutions:

1. Congress extended a welcome to the South African delegation.

2. It declared the Area Reservation and Immigration Registration Bill to be a breach of the Smuts-Gandhi agreement.

3. The Congress reiterated its faith in Civil Disobedience and urged that self-reliance should be the guiding principle in carrying on all political work.

4. The Congress adopted a detailed programme:

(*a*) Education of people in their political rights and training them to acquire the necessary strength and power of resistance to win these rights by carrying out the constructive programme of the Congress with special reference to popularising the Charkha and Khadi, promoting inter-communal unity, the removal of untouchability, the organisation of villages, promotion of education on national lines, the organisation of labour, the general advancement of the national, economical, industrial and commercial interests of the country.

(*b*) The work outside the country shall be directed to the dissemination of accurate information in foreign countries.

(*c*) The Congress adopted on behalf of the country the terms of settlement offered to the Government by the Independent and Swaraj Parties of the Assembly.

(*d*) Hindustani was prescribed as the language in which the proceedings of the Congress and the A.-I.C.C. should ordinarily by conducted.

Rev. J. H. Holmes of America wearing a Gandhi cap addressed the Congress: "I claim Gandhiji for the whole world. The Society of Friends which I represent regards him with great reverence and has full belief in his work. I ought to say that we have gone very far wrong in our Western civilization, we have gone too far in the pursuit of wealth and power. It is a deep evil in our whole Western Civilisation. Our love of wealth has resulted in its concentration, our longing for power has brought on, war after war, and will likely plunge us in further wars, until civilization is destroyed. So we gladly turn to you who are indicating another and better way and follow the brotherly spirit which is represented by the great prophet among you."

FORTY-FIRST SESSION

This session was held at Gauhati in 1926. Mr. S. Srinivas Iyengar presided. He said.

"The foremost of our duties for the coming year is to mobilise all our forces on the issue of the National Demand which was formulated in February, 1924 in the Legislative Assembly by Pandit Motilal Nehru on behalf of the nationalist party consisting of Swarajists and Independents. It asked the Government to establish full responsible Government in India and for that purpose to summon at an early date a representative Round Table Conference.

"Our success constitutes an unmistakable endorsement of national demand and of the policy of walk-out, that marked its rejection by the Government. It also signalises the enthronement of a sound and robusted nationalism in place of communalism as a dominal political factor. A policy of continuous opposition and resistance to the bureaucracy is required to give tone to our organization, and life and vigour to our movement. The need of the hour is not philosophy, but action, not freedom for the individual, but freedom for the nation, not only unity in ideal and object but also unity in method, and action, direction and pace, and above all not polemics and projects but organization and discipline first and last and right through.

Resolutions :

A resolution on late S. Shradhanand was moved by Mahatma Gandhi and seconded by Maulana Mohammad Ali. Mahatmji said : "I have called Abdul Rashid a brother. I repeat it. I don't even regard him as guilty of Swami's murder. Guilty indeed are those who execite feelings of hatred against one another."

On the question of the work in Councils it was decided that :

1. Congressmen will refuse to accept ministerships and oppose the formation of ministeries.

2. Refuse supplies and throw out budgets.

3. Throw out all proposals for legislative enactments by which the bureaucracy proposes to consolidate its powers.

4. Move resolutions and bills which are necessary for the healthy growth of national life.

5. Take steps to improve the condition of peasants.

6. To protect the rights of labour, agricultural and Indus-

trial, and adjust on an equitable basis the relations between landlords and tenants, capitalists and workmen.

The habitual wearing of Khadi was made compulsory to take part in election of Congress officials. Mr. (now Lord) Pethick-Lawrence and his wife attended this session. They expressed their surprise to learn that India's subjection was not only political but social and economic as well.

FORTY-SECOND SESSION

This session was held in 1927 in Madras and was presided over by Dr. M. A. Ansari. He said: "Our national movement has increased in force and volume, political awakening has become widespread, the intensity of the struggle has become more severe and with the march of time the problems we are called upon to solve have grown more and more complex.

" Indians do not claim anything more or less than that they shall occupy the same position, and enjoy the same rights in their country as free people do in their own. The goal of our activities is a free and self-governing India offering equal opportunities to all and recognising and guaranteeing the just and legitimate rights of all sections and classes, at peace with herself and friendly with the rest of the world. Joseph Chamberlain said: 'The Empire is commerce and India is by far the greatest and most valuable of all the customers we have or ever shall have.' The bistory of this philanthropic burglary on the part of Europe is written in blood and suffering from Congo to Canton. Once India is free the whole edifice of Imperialism will collapse as this is the keystone of the arch of Imperialism. The best guarantee for the freedom of Asia, and the peace of the world, is a free and self-governing India."

In the form of a bill before a Convention of the representatives of all political, commercial, labour and other organizations in the country, it was declared that in the event of non-acceptance of the said constitution by the Government by that date or its earlier rejection the Congress would organize a campaign of non-violence non-co-operation including non-payment of taxes and work for Independence.

The enlarged Nehru Committee met, carried out the instructions of the Lucknow Conference and published a supplementary report in November, 1928. The Convention met in Calcutta form December 22 to January 1 at which the members of the Central and Provincial Legislatures, the various political, commercial, communal,

labour, landholders, Indian States, women, back ward classes, journalists and other miscellaneous organizations throughout India were represented.

The following resolution was passed :

" The Convention is of opinion that the resolutions it has already passed on the recommendation of the All-Parties Committee relating to the Constitutional Status of India and other main principles of constitution acceptable to India is of opinion that except on points on which notes of dissent have been recorded at the instance of some of the parties present there is a general agreement on the basis of the solution of the communal problem recommended by the said Committee. This Convention adjourns *sine die* to meet when necessary for completing its work. The Indian National Congress approved for adoption the Nehru Committee report only on the condition that it was accepted in its entirety by the British Government."

The Government did not accept these recommendations. On December 23, 1929, the Viceroy made it clear to Mahatma Gandhi and Pt. Motilal that the recommendations are not acceptable and consequently Independence *i.e.*, Puran Swaraj was definitely decided to be the goal of India. The Nehru report having become an obsolete document was thrown out,

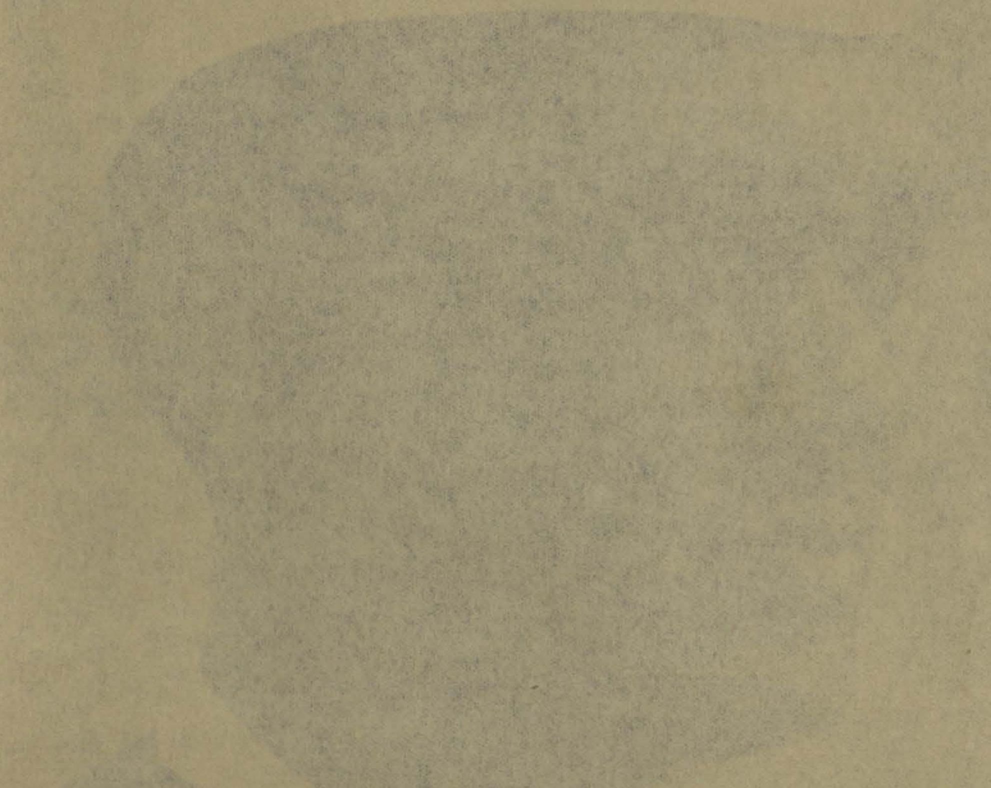
FORTY-THIRD SESSION

This session was held in 1928 in Calcutta. Pt. Motilal Nehru presided.

He said :

" Non-co-operation followed Dyerism and O'Dwyerism. The great giant, *i.e.*, India woke up for a while and the very awakening shooks the foundations of British Rule. There was a reaction and a relapse but again we are on the threshold of another great struggle for freedom.

"The demonstrations held after the return of the Commission to India have been characterised as unmannerly and offensive but all the violence at these demonstrations was started by the Police and attempts made by the people at one or two places to retaliate were speedily put down by their leaders. The orgy of repression has already begun in the Punjab and is likely to extend at no distant date to the other provinces. But this is not without its good. It has shown us the fine courage of our men, especially of the students, their serene coolness under the gravest provocation, their splendid stand against brutal lathi assaults, with their empty



Jai Prakash Narayan

The Symbol of Revolt of the Youth

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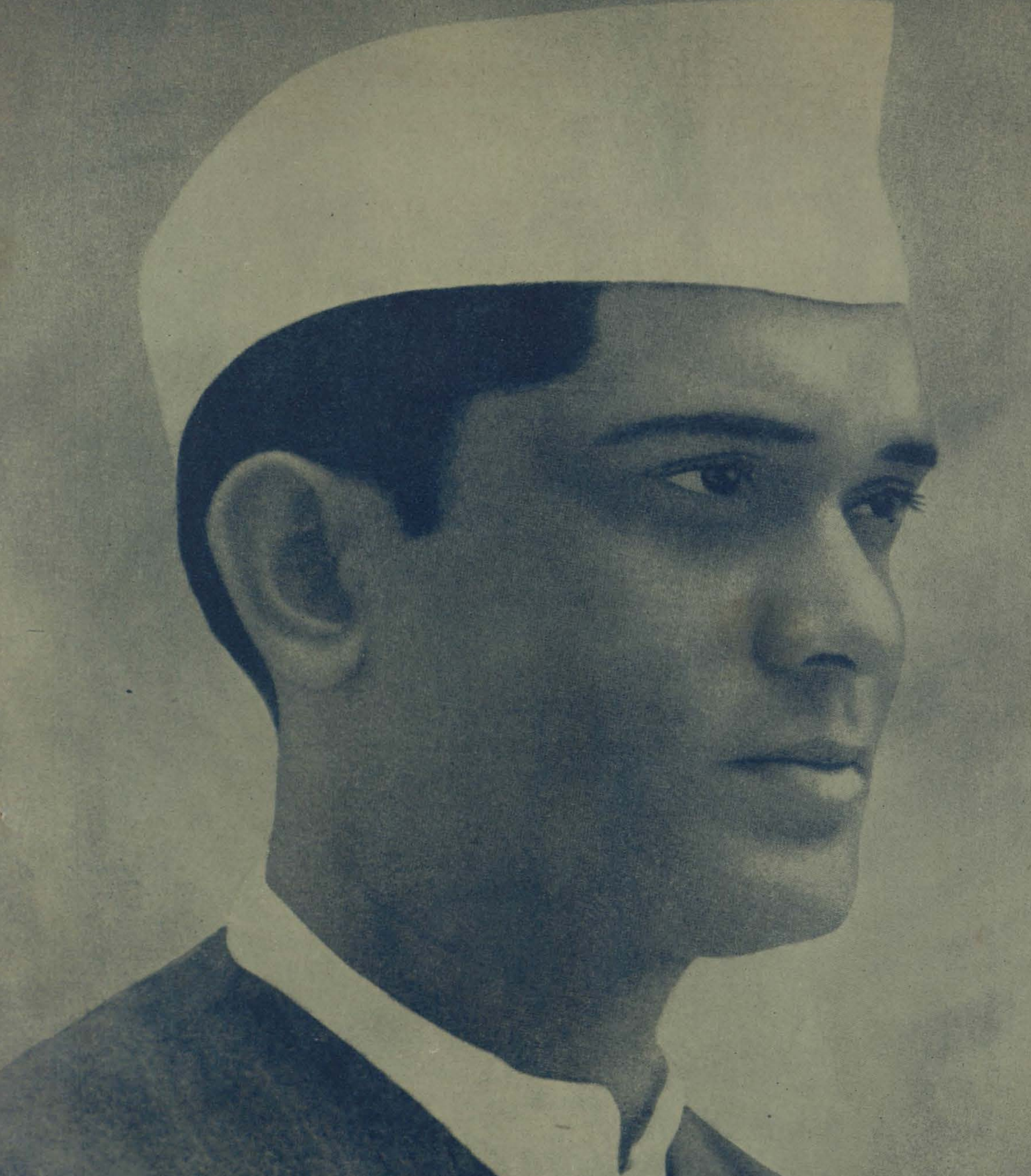
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hands crossed on their chests, their gallant rescue of their comrades and leaders, in utter disregard of the injuries inflicted on them.

"The process of forging new chains to keep us in perpetual bondage has gone on simultaneously. The Government is undoubtedly responsible for the prevailing ignorance and poverty among the masses and in a very large measure for the growing hostility among the masses. We stand at present in the thickest part of wood. We suffer from two sets of serious disabilities—those imposed upon us by foreign rule and those of our own making.

"I wish to urge that the country should lose no time in preparing itself for the next move forward. I urge that all our energies and resources be concentrated on fighting the enemy residing inside our body politic, *viz.*, communal and political discord.

"We should weld India into a nation, with an irresistible will and determination to conquer all obstacles in the way of the realization of its great ideal and occupy the proper place among the nations of the world.

"There is nothing before us but a protracted life and death struggle on the one side and continued repression relieved by an occasional dose of undiluted oppression on the other. We must be prepared to traverse the thorny path to reach our goal. Our destination is Freedom, the form and extent of which will depend upon the time when and under what circumstances it comes.

"The work before the young and old is one and the same. My humble services for what they are worth are at your disposal. Let us sink our differences. Let us march forward shoulder to shoulder and victory is ours."

Another important event of the year is the Bardoli Satyagraha. The people of Bardoli were to have one of the periodical settlements for the enhancement of the revenue. They wanted an impartial committee to be appointed to investigate the conditions of the labour, roads, prices, economic outlook and taxation to see whether any announcement was called for. All the customary and constitutional methods for an enquiry were tried but in vain. Then an ultimatum was issued and a 'No-Tax' campaign was organized for the purpose of obtaining redress. Shriyut Vallabhbhai organized the campaign with earnest determination. Government too tried its best to crush the movement. Neither threats nor efforts to divide the communities succeeded. Some of the elected members of the Bombay Legislative Council resigned

their seats. Vithalbhai Patel, Speaker of the Central Assembly also threatened to resign.

At last a formula was evolved by which the excess was deposited by an intermediary. A court was established which declared that not more than 6¼ per cent should be the measure of enhancement. There was virtually no enhancement of land revenue. The sold out lands were restored to the people and all Patels and Talais were re-instated.

"The main resolution of the year dealt with the Statutory Commission.

"The Congress resolves that the only self-respecting course for India to adopt is to boycott the Commission at every stage and in every form.

"All Congress organizations will organize mass demonstrations on the day of the arrival of the Commission in India and those cities which the Commission may visit and will organize public opinion by vigorous and similar demonstrations to persuade Indians of all shades of political opinion effectively, to boycott the Commission.

"This Congress calls upon non-official members of the Indian legislatures and leaders of political parties and communities of India not to give evidence in any manner, private or public, nor attend nor participate in any social functions given to them."

"A special resolution was passed deploring the callousness of Government in not commuting the brutal sentences passed in Kakori case.

The creed of the Congress was defined to the effect that 'This Congress declares the goal of the Indian people to be complete national Independence.' Mrs. Besant said that it was a dignified and clear statement of India's goal.

A resolution was passed directing the Working Committee to confer with other organisations and to draft a Swaraj Constitution for India on the basis of a Declaration of Rights.

Resolutions :

1. The A.-I. C. C. was called upon to open a Foreign Department to establish contacts with foreign countries.

2. Madras Resolutions against war danger was reiterated.

3. British goods were asked to be boycotted.

4. Congratulations were offered to Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel on the success of the Bardoli struggle.

5. The Congress urged the Ruling Princes of the Indian States to introduce Responsible Government based on Representative institutions in the States.

6. An ultimatum was given to the Governments in form of this Resolution.

"This Congress having considered the constitution recommended by the All-Parties Committee Report welcomes it as a great contribution towards the solution of Indian Political and Communal problems, congratulates the Committee on the vital unanimity of its recommendations and whilst adhering to the resolutions relating to complete Independence passed at the Madras Congress, approves of the constitution as a great step in political advance specially as it represents the largest measure of agreement attained among the important parties in the country.

"Subject to the exigencies of the political situation the Congress will adopt the constitution if it is accepted in its entirety by the British Parliament on or beforet he 31st December, 1929 but in the event of its non-acceptance by that date or its earlier rejection, the Congress will organize a campaign of non-violent non-co-operation by advising the country to refuse taxation and in such other manner as may be decided upon. Consistently with the above nothing in this resolution shall interfere with the carrying on in the name of Congress of the propaganda for complete Independence." To the resolution as it was placed before the Subjects Committee amendments were moved by Jawaharlal and Subhash Bose. Their aim was to put no time-limit nor even by implication to accept dominion status.

Gandhiji when moving this resolution made the following speech :

"You may take the name of Independence on your lips as the Muslims utter the name of Allah or the pious Hindu utters the name of Krishna or Rama but all that matters will be an empty formula if there is no honour behind it. If you are not prepared to stand by your own words where will Independence be. Independence is a thing after all made of sterner stuff. It is not made by the juggling of words."

The Congress placed a detailed programme before the country to be followed for the attainment of the desired objective.

FORTY-FOURTH SESSION

This session was held at Lahore on the banks of the Ravi in

1929. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru presided. Extracts from his address are:

"Brick by brick has on natural movement been built up and often on the prostrate bodies of her martyred sons has India advanced. The giants of old may not be with us but the courage of old is with us still and India can yet produce martyrs like Jatindra and Vijaya. The brief day of European domination is already approaching its end.

"India today is a part of a world movement. India cannot isolate herself from it. And if India has a message to give to the world as I hope she has, she has also to receive and learn much from the messages of other people. The time has indeed already come when the All-Parties' Report has to be put aside and we march forward unfettered to our goal. Independence for us means complete freedom from British domination and British Imperialism. We stand, therefore, today for the fullest freedom of India. The Congress has not acknowledged and will not acknowledge the right of British Parliament to dictate to us in any way. To it we make no appeal.

"I must frankly confess that I am a socialist and a republican and am no believer in Kings and Princes or in the order which produces the modern Kings of industry who have greater powers over the lives and fortunes of men than even Kings of old whose methods are predatory as those of the old feudal aristocracy.

"The Congress will gain in strength however small its actual membership may become if it acts in a disciplined way. Small determined minorities have changed the fate of nations. Mobs and crowds can do little. Freedom itself involves restraint and discipline and each one of us will have to subordinate himself to the larger good. Success often comes to those who dare and act. It seldom goes to the timid who are ever afraid of the consequences. We play high stakes and if we seek to achieve great things it can only be through great dangers. Whether we succeed soon or late none but ourselves can stop us from high endeavour and from writing a noble page in our long and splendid history.

"We have now an open conspiracy to free this country from foreign rule and all our countrymen and countrywomen are willing to join it. But the rewards that are in store for you are suffering and prison and it may be death.'

Just on the eve of the session two events of great public importance occurred. A bomb was made to explode on the train of Lord Irwin. There was a narrow escape But an event of greater

importance was this that in pursuance of the resolution passed by Calcutta Congress the date of ultimatum expired on 29th December, 1929. On 23rd December 1929 Gandhiji and Pandit Motilal Nehru had an interview with the Viceroy. Mr. Jinnah and Mr. Vithalbhai Patel were also there. Gandhiji wanted an assurance that the Round Table Conference would proceed on the basis of Full Dominion Status. The Viceroy replied that Government's view was explained in its communique and he could make no further promise. He was not in a position to extend an invitation to the R.T.C. with any definite promise of Dominion Status.

Resolutions :

1. Deplored the bomb outrage perpetrated on the Viceroy's train. Congratulated Lord and Lady Irwin on their fortunate and narrow escape.

2. "The Congress is of opinion that nothing is to be gained in the existing circumstances by the Congress being represented at the proposed Round Table Conference. The Congress declares that Swaraj shall mean Complete Independence. It declared the entire scheme of Nehru Committee's report to have lapsed and hopes that all Congressmen will henceforth devote their exclusive attention to the attainment of complete Independence for India. This Congress calls upon Congressmen and others taking part in the national movement to abstain from participating directly or indirectly in future elections and directs the present Congress members of the legislatures and committees to resign their seats. This Congress appeals to the nation to zealously prosecute the constructive programme of the Congress and authorises the All-India Congress Committee whenever it deems fit to launch upon a programme of Civil Disobedience including non-payment of taxes whether in selected areas or otherwise and under such safeguards as it may consider necessary."

The date of holding the Congress session was altered to some day in February or March. The Congress assured the Sikhs, the Muslims and other minorities that no solution of any future constitution would be acceptable to the Congress that did not give full satisfaction to the parties concerned.

"This Congress recorded its opinion that every obligation and concession to be inherited by Independent India would be strictly subject to investigation by an independent Tribunal and every such obligation would be repudiated if it is not found to be just and justifiable."

Pandit Jawaharlal on the morn of the New Year unfurled

the flag of independence amidst shouts of 'Inqilab Zindabad'. Much enthusiasm prevailed. As a result of this change in the goal of the Congress January 26th of every year was to be observed as an Independence day and the following declaration was to be read and the pledge of Independence was to be renewed year after year.

"We believe that it is the unalienable right of the Indian people as of any other people to have freedom and to enjoy the fruits of their toil and have necessities of life so that they may have full opportunities of growth. We believe also that if any Government deprives a people of these rights and oppresses them the people have a further right to alter it or ablolish it. The British Government in India had not only deprived the Indian people of their freedom but has based itself on the exploitation of the masses and has ruined India economically, politically, culturally and spiritually. We believe therefore that India must sever the British connection and attain Purna Swarajya or Complete Independence.

"India has been ruined economically. The revenue derived from our people is out of all proportion to our income. Our average income is seven pice (less than two pence) every day and of the heavy taxes we pay 20 per cent. raised from the land revenue derived from the peasantry and 3 per cent. from the salt tax which falls most heavily on the poor. Village industries such as hand-spinning have been destroyed leaving the peasantry idle for at least 4 months of the year and dulling their intellect for want of handicrafts and nothing has been substituted as in other countries for the crafts thus destroyed.

"Customs and currency have been so manipulated as to heap further burdens on the peasantry. British manufactured goods constitute the bulk of our imports. Customs duties betray clear partiality for British manufacturers and revenue from them is used not to lessen the burden on the masses but for sustaining a highly extravagant administration. Still more arbitrary has been the manipulation of exchange ratio which has resulted in millions being drained away from the country.

"Politically India's status has never been so reduced as under the British regime. Reforms have given no real political power to the people. The tallest of us have to bend before foreign authority. The rights of free expression of opinion and free association have been denied to us and many of our countrymen are compelled to live in exile abroad and cannot return to

their homes. All administrative talent is killed and the masses have to be satisfied with petty village offices and clerkships.

"Culturally the system of education has torn us from our moorings and our training has made us hug the very chains that bind us, compulsory disarmament has made us unmanly and the presence of an alien enemy of occupation employed with deadly effect to crush in us the spirit of resistance has made us think that we cannot look after ourselves or put up a defence against foreign aggression or even defend our homes and families from the attack of thieves, robbers and miscreants. We hold it to be a crime against man and God to submit any longer to a rule that has caused this fourfold disaster to our country. We recognise, however that the most effective way of gaining our freedom is not through violence. We will prepare, therefore, ourselves by withdrawing so far as we can, all voluntary association from the British Government and will prepare for civil disobedience including non-payment of taxes. We are convinced that if we can that withdraw our voluntary help and stop payment of taxes without doing violence even under provocation, the end of inhumane rule is assured. We therefore hereby solemnly resolve to carry out the Congress instructions issued from time to time for the purpose of establishing Swaraj."

The Independence Day celebration created enthusiasm among the masses and the message of Swaraj was thus taken to the very hearts of the masses. Every hearth and home resounded with echo of this pledge which people read with zeal and took with sincere devotion.

The Viceroy made it clear that self-determination was out of question. India should not expect anything except domination, pure and simple. Mahatma Gandhi made the following offer to Lord Irwin:

1. Total prohibition.
2. Reduction of exchange ratio to 1-*s*. 4-*d*.
3. Reduction of Land Revenue at least by 50 per cent. and making it subject to Legislative Council.
4. Abolition of the Salt Tax.
5. Reduction of military expenditure at least by 50 per cent. to begin with.
6. Reduction of salaries of the highest grade services by half or less so as to suit the reduced revenue.
7. Protective tariff on foreign cloth.

8. Passage of the coastal traffic Reservation Bill.

9. Discharge of all political prisoners save those condemned for murder or attempt to murder or trial by ordinary Judicial Tribunals and withdrawal of all political prosecutions, of abrogation of Section 124-A. I. P. C. and giving permission to all Indian exiles to return.

10. Abolition of the C. I. D. or its popular control.

11. To issue licenses to use fire-arms for self-defence. " This is by no means an exhaustive list of the pressing needs, wrote Mahatma Gandhi, but let the Viceroy satisfy us with regard to these very simple but vital needs of India. He will then hear no talk of Civil Disobedience and the Congress will heartily participate in the conference."

Mahatma Gandhi said : " Other nations might have different and other means for getting their country's freedom but for India there is no way but non-violent, non-co-operation. May you be the exponents of this *mantra* of Swaraj and may God give you strength and courage, enough to give all that you have, in India's fight for independence, a fight which is drawing very near."

The Working Committee met at Sabarmati on the 14th, 15th, and 16th February and the following resolution on Civil Disobedience was passed :

" In the opinion of the Working Committee, Civil Disobedience should be initiated and controlled by those who believe in non-violence for the purpose of achieving Purna Swaraj as an article of faith and as the Congress contains in its organization not merely such men and women, but also those who accept non-violence as a policy essential in the existing circumstances in the country, the Working Committee welcomes the proposition of Mahatma Gandhi and authorises him and those working with him who believe in non-violence as an article of faith, to the extent above indicated to start civil disobedience as and when they desire and in the manner and to the extent they decide. The Working Committee trusts that when the campaign is actually in action all Congressmen and others will extend to the civil resisters their full co-operation in every way possible and that they will observe and preserve complete non-violence notwithstanding any provocation that may be offered. The Working Committee further hopes that in the event of a mass-movement taking place all those who are rendering voluntary co-operation to the Government such as lawyers and those who are receiving so-called benefits from it such as students will withdraw their co-operation or renounce

benefits as the case may be and throw themselves into the final struggle for freedom.

"The Working Committee trusts that in the event of the leaders being arrested and imprisoned those who are left behind and have the spirit of sacrifice and service in them will carry on the Congress organization and guide the movement to the best of their ability."

This resolution authorised Mahatma Gandhi and his followers to start Civil Disobedience. This was generalised later by the A.-I. C. C. which met shortly after at Ahmedabad. Gandhiji had resolved to raid salt depots shortly after the Sabarmati meeting; the atmosphere was surcharged with salt.



Complete Independence is our Goal

CHAPTER XIX

The Civil Disobedience Movement

THERE was, of course, no privacy about the whole show. Gandhiji would go and pick up salt in some salt area, the others were to wait. He expected an immediate reaction.

Gandhiji's plans have all along been revealed to him by his own instinct, not evolved by the cold, calculated logic of the mind. His inner voice is his mentor and monitor, his philosopher and guide.

Gandhiji lost no time in appraising the Viceroy of his plans He sent him a letter in which he stated:

"My personal faith is clear. I cannot intentionally hurt anything that lives much less fellow human beings even though they may do the greatest wrong to me, and mind I hold the British rule in India to be a curse but I don't therefore consider English men in general to be worse than any other people on earth.

"British rule has impoverished the dumb millions and reduced us politically to serfdom. It has sapped the foundation of our culture and by the policy of disarmament degraded us spiritually. The resolution of Independence should cause no alarm if the word Dominion Status mentioned in your statement had been used in its accepted sense. What I fear is that there never has been any intention of granting such Dominion Status to India in the near future. My ambition is no less than to convert the British people through non-violence. I want to serve them even as I want to serve my own.

"It is my purpose to set in motion the force of non-violence against the organized violent force of the British rule. This will be expressed through Civil Disobedience. For the moment it will be confined to the inmates of the Satyagraha Ashram but ultimately designed to cover all those who choose to join the movement."

Viceroy's reply was unsatisfactory. Mahatma Gandhi wrote: "On bended knees I asked for bread and received a stone instead. The English nation responds only to force and I am not surprised by the Viceregal reply. India is a vast prison-house and I regard it as my sacred duty to break the mournful monotony of compulsory peace that is choking the heart of the nation for want of free vent."

Dandi march was thus inevitable. Sardar Vallabhbhai who went ahead to make necessary preparations was arrested. 75,000 people gathered and declared that they shall go the same path Without achieving freedom for their country they shall know no rest, or peace, nor shall government have peace. Gandhiji began his march on 12th March, 1930 to Dandi accompanied by his seventy-nine padacharies. It was a very historic scene. As the march was progressing three hundred village officers tendered their resignations. Once the march began people caught the spirit of his teaching and the plan of his campaign. People soon realized that non-co-operation and non-violence were not a mere negation but a scheme of resistance. A pledge for a satyagraha was drawn up. Every satyagrahi had to accept the creed of the National Congress and had to express his willingness to go to jail and undergo all sufferings and penalties and not to ask for monetary help and to implicitly obey the order of those who would be in charge of the campaign.

Mahatmaji ordered that in the event of his being arrested, which was an immediate certainty, every satyagrahi should find himself in one of the following state.

In prison or in an analogous state engaged in Civil Disobedience or under orders at the spinning wheel or at some constructive work!

The scenes that preceded, accompanied and succeeded the great national event were so enthusiastic, magnificent and soul-stirring that it is impossible to adequately describe them.

The march lasted 24 days and all along he was emphasising how the march was a pilgrimage, the merit of which lay in keeping the body and soul together and not in fèting and feastings.

Gandhiji reached Dandi on 5th of April. Shrimati Sarojani Naidu was also there. Mahatma decided to seize rather demand and take possession of the salt depot at Dharsana.

It was argued that the national salt like air and water was the property of the public. Gandhiji was arrested and taken to Yervada Jail. Before the arrest he dictated a message in

which he gave directions for the future conduct of the campaign.

" After I am arrested neither the people nor my colleagues should be daunted. The conductor of the fight is God, not I. He dwells in the hearts of all. If we have faith in us God will certainly lead us. Our path is fixed. Whole villages should come forward to pick or manufacture salt. Women should picket liquor and opium and foreign cloth shops. In every house young and old should begin spinning on *takli* and heaps of yarn should be daily woven. There should be bonfires of foreign cloth. No untouchability. The major communities should be satisfied with what remains after satisfaction of minor communities."

The Working Committee met at Allahabad and expanded the scope of Civil Disobedience. Shrimati Sarojini Naidu and her batch of volunteers were arrested on the 16th May and then released. Batches of volunteers rushed later towards the salt depot. Many were beaten and chased out. On the morning of 1st June, nearly 15,000 volunteers and non-volunteers participated in the great mass action at Wadala.

Harrowing and painful scenes were witnessed at Dharsana. The behaviour of the police was very cruel. The volunteers behaved in a very disciplined manner. Mahatma Gandhi was interviewed in jail by George Slocombe, representative of *Daily Herald*, London and he announced that " Mr. Gandhi is perpared to recommend to the Congress a suspension of Civil Disobedience Movement and co-operation with the R. T. C. on the following terms :"

1. The terms of reference of the R.T.C. to include the framing of a constitution giving India the substance of Independence.

2. Satisfaction to be granted to Mr. Gandhi's demand for the repeal of the salt tax, prohibition of liquor and ban on foreign cloth.

3. Amnesty for prisoners convicted of political offences to coincide with the end of the Civil Disobedience campaign.

4. The remaining seven points raised in Mr. Gandhi's letter to the Viceroy to be left for future discussion.

This gesture of conciliation did not materialise. Instead of any rapproachement the Government attitude became still more stiff. Punishments soon became severe. Fines were added to imprisonment. Then came the lathi charges. Police drilled with

lathis in order to assault the Satyagrahis. Boycott of foreign cloth grew very intense. The All-India Working Committee was declared unlawful and Pandit Motilal was arrested on 30th June and sentenced to 6 months' imprisonment. The Police entered college buildings and belaboured the students in class-rooms. In Barisal 500 persons were injured in a lathi charge in one day. At one place the police were said to have set fire to the property of satyagrahis and their sympathisers. Reports of indecent assaults on women were received from many quarters.

The country was ablaze from end to end.

Huge public meetings were held at all big cities. There was firing at Karachi, Sholapur, Patna, Calcutta, Madras, Peshawar and many other places. The one at Peshawar was most tragic, hundreds of brave Pathans having been shot in Qissakhani Bazar, many hundred were badly injured.

A number of Ordinances curtailing the liberty of press, freedom of speech and association were renewed.

After Gandhiji's arrest, the Working Committee met in May at Allahabad and passed the following resolution :

"The Working Committee congratulates all the Satyagrahi volunteers who accompanied Mahatma Gandhi and trusts that fresh batches would take up raids.

"The Working Committee records its appreciation of the lead given by Gandhiji for the conduct of the great campaign, reiterates its abiding faith in Civil Disobedience and resolves to carry on the struggle during the incarceration of Mahatmaji with redoubled vigour.

"In the opinion of the Committee the moment has arrived when the entire nation should make a supreme effort to achieve the goal and it calls upon students, lawyers and other professional men, workers and peasants, merchants, industrialists and government servants and all others to contribute to the success of the fight for freedom by making all sacrifices they are capable of.

"The Committee holds that in the interests of the country it is essential to carry out a complete boycott of foreign cloth throughout the country without delay, and for that purpose to take effective steps, to prevent sales of existing stock, to secure the cancellation of orders already placed and to prevent the placing of future orders. The Committee calls upon all Congress bodies to carry on an intensive propaganda of the boycott of foreign cloth and to picket shops dealing in foreign cloth.

"The Committee while appreciating the efforts of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya to help the boycott movement, regrets that it cannot endorse any agreement or understanding that the sale of the existing stock is to be permitted in return for the promises by the dealers not to import or order foreign cloth for the specified period. The Committee directs all Congress organisations to be no party to any such or similar agreements or understandings with the dealers and importers of foreign cloth.

"The Committee decides to promote the increase of the production of hand-spun and hand-woven cloth in order to meet the growing demand and to set up organisations to introduce the system of exchanging khaddar cloth for hand-spun yarn in addition to selling it for money, and calls upon Congress Organisations generally to encourage hand-spinning. The Committee appeals to every individual to devote some part of his or her time to spinning.

"The Committee is of opinion that the time has arrived for the inauguration of 'No tax' campaign by non-payment of special taxes in certain provinces, and that a beginning should be made by non-payment of the land tax in the Provinces where the ryotwari system prevails, such as Gujerat, Maharashtra, Karnatak, Andhra, Tamil Nad and the Punjab, and the non-payment of the Chowkidari tax in provinces like Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. It calls upon such provinces to organize campaigns of non-payment of the land tax or Chowkidari tax in areas selected by the Provincial Congress Committees. It calls upon the Provincial Congress Committees to continue and extend the manufacture of contraband salt and directs that technical breaches of the Salt-Law shall be continued with redoubled energy at places where it is sought to be prevented by the Government by arrests or otherwise. The Committee resolves that as a mark of the country's disapproval of the Salt-Law, Congress organizations should organise public breaches of those laws on every Sunday.

"The Committee approves and confirms the action of the Acting President in permitting the breach of Forest Laws in the C. P. and resolves that in other provinces similar laws in force may be breached after the sanction of the Provincial Congress Committee.

"The Committee authorises the Acting President to enter into negotiations with Indian mill-owners with a view to devising means to prevent an unfair increase in the prices of Swadeshi Mill cloth and the manufacture of spurious khaddar,

and generally to take steps to promote the boycott of foreign cloth.

"Regarding the boycott of British goods it urges the people to make earnest attempts to bring about an effective boycott thereof at an early date.

"The Committee further appeals strongly to the public to boycott all British banking, insurance, shipping and similar other institutions.

"The Committee once again emphasises the necessity of carrying on an intensive propaganda in favour of total prohibition and calls upon the Provincial Congress Committee for picketing liquor or toddy shops.

"The Committee regrets the outbreak of mob violence in certain places and cannot too strongly condemn such violence. The Committee desires to emphasise the necessity of strict observance of non-violence.

"The Committee strongly condemns the Press Ordinance and appreciates the action of those newspapers which have refused to submit to it. It calls upon Indian newspapers which have not yet ceased publication, or having ceased publication, have re-appeared to stop further issues. The Committee calls upon the people to boycott all Anglo-Indian and Indian papers which continue publication hereafter."

This programme was approved at subsequent meetings of the Working Committee from time to time. Mass Salt raids took place at Wadala and Sanikalla, from ten to fifteen thousand volunteers took part.

The Government attitude was most unsympathetic. Brutal lathi charges, heavy fines and inhuman treatment of Civil Disobedience prisoners became the order of the day,

The Congress Working Committee met at Allahabad on 27th June and decided to intensify the salt Satyagraha, boycott of foreign goods, etc.

In answer to a question by S. C. Mitra regarding the number of cases of firing, the Hon'ble Mr. H. G. Haig stated as under:

CASUALTIES AMONGST THE PUBLIC

Province		Date	Killed	Wounded	Remarks
Madras city	...	April 27th 1930	2	6	1 died subsequently
Karachi	...	„ 16th	1	6	„
Bengal, Calcutta	...	„ 1st	7	59	„
„ „	...	„ 15th	...	3	„
24 Parganas	...	„ 24th	1	3	
Chittagong	...	„ 18, 19 and 20th	10	2	Both died subsequently
Madras	...	May 30th	...	2	
Bombay, Sholapur	...	8th	12	28	
Wadala Salt Pans	...	24th	...	1	
Bhendy Bazar	...	26th and 27th	5	67	
Bengal, Howrah	...	6th	...	5	
Chittagong	...	7th	4	6	3 died subsequently
Mymensingh	...	14th	1	Between 30 and 40	
Midnapur	...	...	...	...	
Pratapdighi	...	31st	2	2	
U. P. Lucknow	...	26th	1	42	2 died subsequently
Punjab		...	...	...	
Kulu-Jhelum Districts		18th	...	1	
Burma Rangoon	...	Last week	5	37	
N.-W. F. Province	...	...	17	37	
Delhi	...	6th	4	40	

The Civil Disobedience continued vigorously in spite of untold repression, more than hundred thousand persons, including, thousands of ladies and fifteen thousand Muslims courted arrest. All efforts for a compromise failed in spite of attempts of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and Mr. Jaykar, throughout the year.

The following statement was issued by His Excellency the Governor-General on the 25th January, 1931:

"In order to provide opportunity for consideration of the statement made by the Prime Minister on the 19th January, my Government, in consultation with Local Governments have thought it right that members of the Working Committee of the All-India Congress should enjoy full liberty of discussion between themselves and with those who have acted as members of the Committee since 1st January 1930.

"In accordance with this decision and with this object and in order that there may be no legal bar to any meeting they may



wish to hold, the notification declaring the Committee to be an Unlawful Association under the Criminal Law Amendment Act, will be withdrawn by all Local Governments and action will be taken for the release of Mr. Gandhi and others who are now members of the Committee, or who have acted as such since 1st January, 1930.

"My Government will impose no conditions on these releases because we feel that the best hope of restoration of peaceful conditions lies in discussions being conducted by those concerned under terms of unconditional liberty. Our action has been taken in pursuance of a sincere desire to assist the creation of such peaceful conditions as would enable the Government to implement the undertaking given by the Prime Minister that if civil quiet were proclaimed and assured, the Government would not be backward in response.

"I am content to trust those who will be affected by our decision to act in the same spirit as inspires it. And I am confident that they will recognise the importance of securing for those grave issues calm and dispassionate examination."

An agreement was reached between the Government and the Congress after many days' strenuous discussions in which Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, and Mr. M. R. Jaykar took a prominent part The agreement is known as Gandhi-Irwin Pact. Gandhiji called this Pact as the victory of both the Congress and the Government.

On 18th April Lord Irwin left India and Gandhiji bade him good-bye. When the Congress concluded the truce, it was in high hopes that an agreement would be reached between the various communities in India, and also that Government would lend a helping hand to that end. But all such hopes failed. The Working Committee passed a resolution that Mahatma Gandhi should represent the Congress at the Round Table Conference if thereto required for the presentation of the Congress position.

Gandhiji had strictly warned the Congressmen not to initiate any aggressive campaign, but not to suffer any insults to national self-respect. Demoralisation was the great demon that Gandhiji was seeking to avoid. Fear and a sense of helplessness were the things he insisted on conquering.

It did not take long to discover that the high hopes engendered by the Viceroy's airy speeches were not to be realised. The Government began to show its repressive hand. Complaints began to pour in, that the Government was going back on its promise. Mahatma handed all these to the Government of India when he

went to Simla about the middle of July. The reply of the Government was disappointing in the extreme. Mahatama Gandhi sent a telegram to the Viceroy on 11th August.

"Exceedingly regret to inform you that my departure for London is being rendered impossible. I must not sail as I promised. I have brought this to your notice. I shall await a reply before making an announcement". The Viceroy replied. "I should regret extremely if for reasons you have given the Congress were to be unwilling to carry out the arrangement which provided for their representation at the conference. I am unable to accept these reasons as valid. I could have hoped that you would not allow disputes over the present details to prevent your serving India, by participating in the momentous discussions of the future constitution which may determine the destiny of the country beyond your time or mine. If, however, your telegram represents the final word I will at once inform the Prime Minister of your inabilty to attend the conference." Mahatma Gandhi sent a telegram on August 13, 1931, "I regret to say that there is no way left open to me but to confirm the decision already conveyed. I can only add that I tried my utmost to go to London but failed. Please inform the Prime Minister accordingly." Viceroy's telegram. "I have informed the Prime Minister of your decision."

There was another very important reason as to why Gandhiji would not go to England. This was the failure of the Government of India to nominate Dr. Ansari as a delegate to the Round Table Conference. Besides being a Congressman he represented a great party in India, the National Mussalman Party, which had for its objective Puran Swaraj. Lord Irwin had promised that Dr. Ansari would be included in the list but Lord Willingdon intentionally cut out his name to make it appear at the Round Table Conference, that Mussalman India was against Swaraj. Government knew that the Congress formula regarding communal question would be supported by Gandhiji and Ansari and hence wanted to belittle the prestige of the Congress by refusing to include Dr. Ansari among the delegates.

Mahatma Gandhi publicly expressed his fear that the great civilians did not want him to attend the conference, or if they do, they do so under circumstances which a national organisation like the Congress can never tolerate.

Ultimately matters were settled amicably and it was agreed that Gandhiji should proceed to London in order to attend the Round Table Conference on behalf of the Congress and he sailed on 29th August but had no hopes of success.

Gandhiji preferred in London the East end to the West end, the hospitality of Miss Murial Lester against that of the British Government, and the company of the poor in opposition to that of the wealthy. Uncle Gandhi, thin and frail with a strip of loin cloth and a chadar to cover him almost bare-footed and bare-headed was a very popular figure among the Britishers. He held his prayer meetings which were attended by British men in large numbers. He was the guest alike of labourers and of Bishops and Arch-bishops.

The most notable event is that he paid a visit to His Majesty the King in his usual dress and he had a very cordial welcome.

At the Round Table Conference.

He was the centre of attraction at the Conference not only because he was the sole representative of the premier political organisation of India and had gone there armed with full authority from the Congress to settle matters as best as he could but because of his being the greatest man of the hour. He made a nice and charming speech at the Federal Structure Committee quoted by us in the early pages. He pointed out the fundamental differences between the Government and the Congress and between the Congress and the other parties. He read out the Karachi Congress Resolution regarding fundamental rights. He pointed out how the Premier's statement fell short of the Indian ideal. He dwelt upon the supreme need of the hour which was not merely a political constitution but a scheme of partnership between two nations. Speaking at the Minorities Conference Gandhiji cleared the situation by declaring in unambiguous language that the different communities were encouraged to press with all the vehemence at their command, their own respective views and pointed out that this question was not the goal, the central fact was constitution building.

Apparently Government's scheme was only a scheme for India's power to bureaucracy and not one designed to achieve Responsible Government. He said, "I wish them well and the Congress is entirely out of it. The Congress will wander no matter how many years in the wilderness rather than bind itself to a proposal under which the hardy tree of Freedom and Responsible Government can never grow." Finally he concluded with that mighty vow which was the cause of his taking a fast unto death in 1932 in Yervada Jail. He said, "I can understand the claims advanced on behalf of other communities but the claims on behalf of the untouchables are to me the unkindest cut of all.

We don't want the untouchables to be classified as a separate class. Sikhs may remain such perpetually so many Mohammedans and Christians, why the untouchables remain untouchable perpetually. "I would like that Hinduism died rather than that untouchability lived. I want to say with all the emphasis I can command that if I were the only person to resist this thing, I will resist it with my life." He would not be a party to the separate representation of other communities. The Premier put this straight question. "Will you, each of you, every member of the Committee sign a request to me to settle the communal question and pledge yourself to accept my decision. That I think is a very fair offer."

By the 1st of November 1931 Premier expressed his intention to wind up the Committee and to summon a plenary session a week after.

In the Conference on the 1st of December Gandhiji proposed a vote of thanks to the Chair and pointed out that they had come to the parting of ways and the ways would take different ways.

"I don't know in what direction my path would be but it does not matter to me. Even though I may have to go in an exactly opposite direction. You are still entitled to a vote of thanks from the bottom of my heart."

With these words he left the Round Table Conference.

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE AGAIN

There were gathered in Bombay representatives of all parts and provinces of India to accord a welcome to Mahatma Gandhi. He had a very enthusiastic reception at Bombay. Thousands greeted him.

He made a speech in Bombay in which he again repeated his terrific vow that he would not have the dismemberment of the untouchables.

For three days Gandhiji was acquainting himself with the woes of the different provinces. Gandhiji called the ordinances in N. W. F. P. and U. P. as New Year gifts from Lord Wellingdon. He himself had a tale of woe to tell his friends which he brought from London. Mahatma Gandhi sent a telegram to Lord Wellingdon on 29th December 1931:

"I was unprepared on landing yesterday to find Frontier and U. P. Ordinances, shootings in frontier and arrests of valued comrades in both, on top of Bengal Ordinance awaiting me."

In the course of the correspondence between the Congress and the Government it was made clear on behalf of the former that they were prepared to accept any situation, however, arrived at provided it gave sufficient relief to the peasantry. As no relief was forthcoming, the U. P. Congress after obtaining permission from the President of the All-India Congress advised the peasantry to withhold payment of rent and revenue temporarily pending negotiations.

This led to the arrest of Congress workers and finally Pt. Jawahar Lal, Mr. Sherwani and Babu Purshottam Dass Tandon were arrested while Gandhiji was on his way to India.

Bengal was another centre of strife. During this period atrocious measures were enacted which outwardly were perpetrated against the terrorist outrages in the districts.

The Working Committee severely condemned the local Police and Magistrate who with the assistance of certain non-official Europeans and hooligans had inflicted terrible losses, indignities on innocent people in persuance of a policy of terrorisation.

The President of the Congress Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel addressed the Government on several occasions but without any effect.

Every endeavour was made on the part of Congress to carry on the struggle without malice and in strictly non-violent manner.

The Government took up the fight where it had been left on 4th March 1931.

The truce period was the period of preparation on the part of the Government for renewed hostilities, Ordinances, lathi-charges became the ruling features of the Government and thousands of men and women were very soon put behind the bars.

CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE CAMPAIGN AGAIN

When Mahatma Gandhi came back to India altogether empty-handed he found to his utter disappointment that the situation had entirely deteriorated. Lord Wellingdon was entirely in the hands of his secretariat who was always on the lookout to reduce to nothingness agreement arrived at between Gandhiji and Irwin and had armed himself with all the weapons to crush the Congress and its perfectly valid activities. Mahatma Gandhi an apostle of truth and sincerety was not prepared for such a state. Lord

Wellingdon let loose the whole machinery of the Government to strangle the Congress. The very Government which had promised to faithfully execute the terms mutually agreed upon with a view to prepare the country for Swaraj became activily hostile and started the wheels of repression to kill the Congress. While Gandhiji was eager to seek an interview with Lord Wellingdon to discuss with him the possibility of finding a way out of the ugly situation created by Lord Wellingdon and his Government by arresting Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru and Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan. Lord Wellingdon was taking steps to arrest him and other leaders. The Government was fully prepared to pulverize the Congress.

On 4th January 1932 Mahatma Gandhi and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel were arrested and simultaneously the Ordinance Raj was introduced in several provinces of India. Many Provincial Congress and their subordinate Committees, Ashrams, National Schools and other nationalist organisations were declared unlawful and their funds were snatched away from them. They were forcefully stopped from carrying on the peaceful and legitimate activities. Almost every Congress leader be he of All-India or Provincial or local fame and status, was arrested and spirited away from his scene of activities. The Congress took up this challenge in a bold and brave manner. Even though the contest between a peaceful unarmed and unequipped organisation and between Government an embodiment of organised violence and armed with fullest authority to do whatever it liked was unequal and even though the Congress was more or less taken unaware it rose equal to the occasion and gave a very good account. The control of the movement was vested in the hands of dictators. The movement was carried on in the most magnificent manner but at last the machinery of the government did succeed in its nefarious object of overawing the people. Lathi-charges, firing, brutal assaults, fines and exorbitant taxes were bound to crush the movement and after the protracted struggle for about 18 months the Congress decided to suspend the movement. The record of nation was glorious, the response of the people was generous, the enthusiasm was grand and the Congress and the people had a enviable record.

During this period in spite of all precautions taken by the Government and in face of wholesale prosecutions and ruthless persecutions, annual sessions of the Congress were full of zeal and had a marvellous success. One was held in Delhi in 1932 and the other in Calcutta.

Every man and woman took up the gauntlet and behaved in a very admirable and commendable manner. All the possible resources were availed of and a very successful fight was put up. The Government unscrupulously and unhesitatingly and unreservedly resorted to the ruthless and repressive measures to the fullest extent. Punitive police collective fines, became the order of the day. Poor, peaceful innocent people were made to pay exorbitant sums. Non-violent crowds were fired at resulting in the death and injuries to many, but the people carried on the orders of the Congress. The boycott took a most intensive form and special items were selected for intensive work. Strenuous efforts were made to boycott foreign cloth, British medicines, British Banks and Insurance Companies etc. Sardar Vallabhbhai, on the eve of his arrest, had prepared a list of persons who would keep the torch of civil disobedience burning and who would be Dictators of the movement. The Working Committee was not to be reformed.

Besides such Punitive tax, collective fines were also imposed on many localities and the inhabitants made to pay them. In several places in the country, firing was resorted to and many persons killed and many more injured. In this respect the N. W. F. P. suffered the severest losses in killed and injured.

CHAPTER XX

Congress Year By Year—(*Contd.*)

FORTY-SIXTH SESSION

THOUGH almost all the Provincial and All-India leaders of the Congress were behind the bars, yet those who were free to move and act did resolve to hold the annual session of the Congress. Accordingly this session was held at Delhi in 1932.

The Government took all steps to harass the Reception Committee. It served notices on proprietors of hotels, dharamsalas, and even private houses, that they should not allow any Congress delegate to stay in their premises. The officials issued orders that anybody letting his house to the Reception Committee was taking the risk of having his house notified and taken possession of by the Government. In spite of multitudinous handicaps and difficulties the session was held under the clock tower in Chandni Chowk. Though police pickets had been placed on the road to prevent the delegates from attending the session, 500 delegates were present at the session. Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya the president-elect was arrested. Seth Ranchhod Dass Amritlal presided. The session lasted for about 10 minutes and the following resolutions were passed'.

1. Reiterating complete Independence as the goal of the Congress.

2. Whole-heartedly endorsing the revival of Civil Disobedience.

3. Congratulating the nation on its splendid response to Mahatma Gandhi's call, and

4. Re-affirming deep faith in non-violence and congratu-



NETAJI with his army of liberation

lating the country particularly the brave pathans of N.-W. F. P. upon their remaining non-violent in face of the gravest provocation by the authorities.

The spirit of the people was at a very high level, and they were eager to court arrest and welcome suffering.

The police arrested several hundreds of delegates. They continued pouring in. The police instead of arresting them began lathi-charges which were very mercilessly done and quite a large number of people were injured. The police, as usual, extended brutal and barbarous treatment to those who had gathered there to keep the banner of the Congress flying.

FORTY-SEVENTH SESSION

This session was held at Calcutta in March 1933. Sjt. Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya was to preside, but he was arrested *en route* to Calcutta and therefore in his place Mrs. Nellie Sen Gupta presided. She was arrested and convicted and sentenced to six months' imprisonment.

It confirmed the resolutins passed at the preceding session held at Delhi in 1932 and in addition passed the following resolutions :—

"The Congress is firmly of opinion that in the situation in which the country is placed, the civil disobedience movement should be strengthed and extended, and the Congress therefore calls upon the people to pursue the movement with greater vigour on the lines laid down by the Working Committee."

" The Congress calls upon all classes and sections of the people to completely eschew foreign cloth, to give preference to khadi and to boycott British goods."

"The Congress is confident that the public will not be duped by the scheme outlined in the recently published White Paper and holds that no constitution framed by the British Government while it is engaged in conducting a compaign of ruthless repression, involving the imprisonment, and internment, of the most trusted leaders of the nation and suppression of rights of free speech, free press and association, will be acceptable."

It reiterated Karachi Congress resolutions on Fundamental Rights."

Along with Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya were arrested

Mrs. Pandit, Pt. Moti Lal, Dr. Syed Mohmood and others. Shrijut M. S. Aney, Acting President of the Congress, was also arrested.

FORTY-EIGHTH SESSION

This session was held in Bombay in 1934. Shrijut Dr. Rajendra Prasad presided.

The Civil Disobedience Movement had been suspended in May 1934. The ban on the Congress organisations had been withdrawn. This session was momentous. The attendance was a record one.

Few extracts from the Presidential address :

" Let us start with a clear slate on the work in front of us The need of the hour is not for a bigger or more inspiring programme, but for the determination to achieve what little we may set before ourselves. The task is immense.

"The N.-W. F. P. Province which has had a severe spell of repression, which the brave Pathans led by that selfless and patriotic servant Abdul Ghaffar Khan have borne with exemplary restraint.

" Our method is crystal clear. It is active, dynamic, non-violent mass action. We may fail once, we may fail twice but bound to succeed some day."

The following Resolutions were passed:

1. Faith in Satyagraha as against methods of violence.

2. A new constitution was adopted for the Congress. No member was to be eligible for election to any office unless he was a habitual wearer of hand-spun and hand-woven khaddar.

3. Complete confidence and fullest faith was expressed in Mahatmaji and his policy and programme. It placed on record its deep sense of gratitude for the unique services rendered by him to the nation.

4. The repressive policy of the Government was strongly condemned.

5. All the resolutions passed by the Working Committee and the All-India Congress Committee at the meeting held in May 1934, and thereafter especially the resolutions regarding the Parliamentary Board and its policy and programme were confirmed.

6. The Congress congratulated the nation on the heroic sacrifices made and the sufferings undergone by thousands of civil resisters, men and women young and old.

FORTY-NINTH SESSION

This was held at Lucknow in 1936. It was presided over by Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru. His presidential address criticised the state of things then prevailing. He said, " We have largely lost touch with the masses particularly among the Muslims. It gave a resounding lead, for it proclaimed a socialist objective, the demand for a broad mass front of all anti-imperialist forces, unity of the working class and the peasantry with the middle class predominating in the Congress and focussing of the Indian struggle in the context of the developing world movement against Fascism and its friends in the camp of imperialism and reaction.

" We cannot isolate the Indian problem from that of the rest of the world.

"Inevitably we take our stand with the progressive forces of the world which are ranged against Fascism and Imperialism. We have to deal with one imperialism in particular, the oldest and most far-reaching of the modern world and that is the final argument for Indian Independence and for the severance of our connection with the British Empire.

Socialism is the only key to the solution of the world's problems. Socialism in the scientific and economic sense. It is a vital creed which I hold with all my head and heart.

The important resolutions passed at the session related to:

1. Provincial elections and the Constituent Assembly.
2. The Convention.
3. Hartal on April 1937.
4. Agrarian Programme.
5. Congress constitution and mass contact.
6. Suppression of civil liberties.
7. Frontier policy of the Government.
8. The War danger.

It was decided that a convention consisting of all the elected members of the provincial and central legislatures together with

the members of the All-India Congress Committee be held to consider what steps should be taken inside legislatures to carry out the resolve of the country to reject the constitution, Augmenting the election mainfesto, and put forth demand for a constituent Assembly

FIFTIETH SESSION

This session was held at Faizpur on December 27th and 28th, in 1936.

Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru presided.

The following are a few extracts from his presidential address :

" The elections have many things to teach us but the most astounding fact is this, where we went to the masses direct we won overwhelmingly. Our partial lack of success in some provinces was clearly due to the Congress organisations being confined to the cities and having little contact with peasantry. We must remedy these failings and speak more the language of the masses and fashion our policy to meet their needs. We must carry the Congress organisation to every village, and the Congress message to every mud hut. We talk of Swaraj and Independence but in human terms it means relief to the masses from their unutterable sorrow and misery."

The following resolutions were paseed :

1. The Congress having considered the report of Shri V. K. Menon on the world Peace Conference records its appreciation of the part he took in the Congress as its representative. It supports wholeheartedly the objective of the peace Congress to ensure world peace by removing the causes of war and offers its full co-operation to it in this urgent and vital task.

2. The Congress is fully conscious of the necessity of facing the world menace in co-operation with the progressive nations, and peoples of the world and especially with those peoples who are dominated over and exploited by Imperialism and Fascism.

3. In the opinion of the Congress the policy pursued by the Government of India on the North-West Frontier has been a real failure and has caused great injury both to the interests of India and the trans-frontier tribes. In the opinion of the Congress the right way to deal with frontier situation is for an inquiry to be made into the economic, political and military situation with

a view to settle finally and peacefully the problems of Frontier in co-operation with the border tribes.

4. The Congress again draws attention to and condemns the suppression of civil liberties in India which continue intensively and prevents public life, and crushes the present generation in India.

5. This Congress reiterates its entire rejection of the Government of India Act of 1935 and the constitution that has been imposed on India against the declared will of the people of the country.

In order to demonstrate effectively the will of the Indian people to resist the imposition of the unwanted constitution and as an earnest of their determination to launch a powerful mass movement for its destruction the Congress issues, a call for a nation-wide hartal or general strike on 1st April, the day on which the new constitution is to be inaugurated.

FORTY-FIRST SESSION

This session was held in 1938 at Haripur. Shriyut Subhas Bose presided. Subhas's speech was heard in pin drop silence and is full of life and animation. The following are a few extracts from the address.

"It is a well-known truism that every empire is based on the policy of divide and rule. I doubt if any empire in the world has practiced this policy so skilfully, systematically and ruthlessly. I have no doubt British ingenuity will seek some other constitutional device for India and thereby neutralising the transference of power to the Indian People. Any constitution for India which emanates from Whitehall, must be examined with the utmost care and caution.

Satyagraha as I understand it, is not merely passive resistance but active resistance as well, though that activity must be of a non-violent character. The party that wins freedom for India should also be the party that will put into effect the entire programme of post-war reconstruction. I have no doubt in my mind that our chief national problems relating to the eradication of poverty, illeteracy and disease and the scientific production and distribution can be tackled only along socialistic lines.

Inside the Congress there are differences between the right and the left which it would be futile to ignore. Outside, there is the challenge of British Imperialism which we are called upon to face. The Congress to-day is the one supreme organisation of

the mass struggle. It is the common platform of all anti-imperialist organisations trying for Indian emancipation. Let us therefore rally the whole country under the banner of the Indian National Congress. Ours is a struggle not only against British Imperialism but against World Imperialism as well of which the former is the key-stone. We are, therefore, fighting not for the cause of India alone but of humanity as well. India freed means humanity saved.

FIFTY-SECOND SESSION

This Session was held at Tripuri in March 1939. Shri Subhas Bose presided.

The presidential election this time was not of the humdrum type. If was followed by sensational development culminating in the resignation of 12 out of 15 members of the Working Committee. On the eve of Tripuri Congress events at Rajkot forced Mahatma Gandhi to take a vow of fast unto death. And then the president arrived at Tripuri a sick man.

Following are some extracts from his presidential address :

"This year promises to be an abnormal or extraordinary one in many ways. The time has come for us to raise the issue of Swaraj and submit our national demand to the British Government in the form of an ultimatum and give a certain time-limit within which a reply is to be expected. If no reply is received within this period or if an unsatisfactory reply is received we should resort to mass civil disobedience or Satyagraha. The British Government is not in aposition to face a major conflict like an All-India Satyagraha for a long period, what mor oppportun moment could we find in our national history for a final advance in the direction of Swaraj particularly when the international situation is favourable to us. All the facts of the present-day situation are so much to our advantage that one should entertain the highest degree of optimism. If we sink our differences, pool all our resources and pull our all weight in the national struggle we can make our attack on British Imperialism irresistable. Shall we have the political foresight to make the best of our present favourable position or shall we miss the opportunity which is a rare opportunity in life-time of the nation.

"We shall have to take steps to ruthlessly remove whatever corruption or weakness has entered our ranks largely due to lust of power.

" All the radical elements in the country must work in close

harmony and co-operation and the efforts of all anti-imperialist organisations must converge in the direction of a final assault on British Imperialism. The atmosphere within the Congress is clouded and dissensions have appeared. Many of our friends are consequently feeling depressed and dissipated. I have faith in the patriotism of my countrymen and I am sure that before long we shall be able to tide over the present difficuties and restore unity within our ranks. May the spirit of my late Guru Deshbandhu Dass and Pandit Moti Lal Nehru of hollowed memory and of other great sons of India inspire us in the present crisis and may Mahatma Gandhi who is still with us, guide and assist our nation—help the Congress out of the present tangle, is my prayer."

A big procession of 51 elephants was arranged but it had to be taken without him as he was too ill to stand the strain. In the Subjects Committee Pandit Govind Ballabh Pant moved a resolution that "for the better feeling in the Congress the President is to form the Committee according to the wishes of Mahatma Gandhi."

Subhas had wired to Mahatmaji to come but the reply received was " You may defy doctors but I cannot." Pandit Pant's resolution was passed in the Subjects Committee by a bare Majority but in the open house by an overwhelming one. Mahatmaji wrote to him.

"I feel myself utterly incompetent to give you the names for Working Committee in spirit of Pant's resolution. You are free to choose your own Committee. It has been a matter of greatest grief to me that mutual settlement has not been possible." Subhas Bose resigned his office. Dr. Rajendra Prased was elected as President in his place.

THE FORWARD BLOC

Early May 1939 the Forward Bloc was formed as a left wing of the Congress with the object of attaining Independence by all legitimate means. To fight provincialism and communalism and to seek to eradicate corruption in the Congress and to free that body from vested interests and from the domination of Congress ministers. Subhas fixed 9th July to protest against two resolutions passed by the All-India Congress Committee, that Satyagraha was not to be launched in a place without the consent and approval of the Provincial Congress Committee, and that a Provincial Congress Committee was not to interfere with day-to-day work of Provincial ministers. Dr. Rajendra Prased wrote to Subhas Bose not to hold the comtemplated demonsrations as it would be rebelling of a subordinate body against a parent body. Subhas

did not agree to this. The Working Committee considered Subhas's explainations and resolved that for this grave act of indiscipline Mr. Subhas is declared disqualified as President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee and to be a member of any elective Congress Committee for three years as from August, 1939.

FIFTY-THIRD SESSION

This Session was held at Ramgarh in 1940. It was presided over by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad.

The Presidential address and conduct of the proceedings of that session more than justified the nation's choice. The Maulana had only one main topic for exhaustive treatment in his Address. Not a paragraph in it was superfluous and no words wasted.

At the very outset the Maulana referred to the new departure in the Congress resolutions since 1936 a departure with which he completely indentified himself.

He said, "A consideration of the international situation and a resolution thereon has become an essential and integral part of the annual declarations of the Congress since 1936. We stated that we could not remain in isolation from the political events of the outside world even in our present state of helplessness. It was essential that while we forged our way ahead and fashioned our future we must not confine ourselves to our own surroundings but should keep vigilant watch on the conditions of the outside world. It is impossible for India to consider her problems while confining herself within four walls. It is inevitable that events in the outside world should have their repercussions in India. It is equally inevitable that our decisions and conditions prevailing in India should affect the whole world. It was this consciousness and belief which brought about our decisions. We declared by these resolutions against reactionary movements like Fascism and Nazism which were directed against democracy and individual and national freedom. These movements were gaining strength day-by-day and India regarded them as the greatest danger to the world progress and peace. India's head and heart were with those people who were standing up for democracy and freedom and resisting the wave of reaction. It is impossible for us to forget the older danger which has proved unfortunately to be more fatal to the peace and freedom of nation than this new danger and which has in fact supplied the basis for this re-action. I refer to British Imperialism : we are not distant spectators of this Imperialism as we are of the new



This is the prosperity England gave us

reactionary movements. It has taken possession of our homes and dominates over us. It was for this reason that we stated in clear terms that if new entanglements in Europe brought about war, India, which has been debarred from exercising her will and making free decisions, will not take any part in it. She could only consider this question when she had acquired the right of coming to a decision according to her own free will and choice.

"India cannot endure the prospect of Nazism and Fascism but she is even more tired of British Imperialism. If India remains deprived of her national right of freedom, this would clearly mean that British Imperialism continued to flourish with all its traditional characteristics. Under such conditions India would, on no account, be prepared to lend a helping-hand for the triumph of British Imperialism."

Further on he said:

"It is not a question of the desire or of the measure of the desire of the British Government. The straight and simple question is of India's right, whether she is entitled to determine her own fate or not. This question forms the foundation-stone of the Indian problem; India will not allow it to be removed, for if it is displaced the whole structure of Indian nationalism will collapse. Our case is crystal clear. We don't wish to see British Imperialism triumphant and stronger and thus lengthen the period of our own subjection to it. We absolutely refuse to do so. Our way lies patiently in the opposite direction.

"British Imperialism stands in the way of peace and justice to-day exactly as it did before the War. The Indian demand was a touchstone of Britain's claim of fighting this War for peace and justice. They have been tested and found counterfeit and untrue."

On the Hindu-Muslim question he said:

"We Mohammedans can say with pride that we are Indians and follow Islam. Do we Indian Mussalmans view the free India of the future with suspicion and distrust or with courage and confidence.

"If we view with suspicion and distrust then we are forced to tolerate the existence of a third power which is already entrenched here and has no intention of withdrawing, and if we follow this path of fear we must need look forward to its continuance. But if we are convinced that for us fear and doubt have no place and that we must view the future with courage and confidence in ourselves, then our course of action becomes

absolutely clear. We find ourselves in a new world which is free from dark shadows of doubt, vacillation, inaction and apathy, and where the light of faith and determination, action and enthusiasm never fails. It becomes our bounden duty to march with assured steps to India's national goal.

"I could not concieve it possible that a Mussalman would like the third power to continue its domination in India. This is against the spirit of Islam.

The Congress has always attached the greatest importance to this question and has made it a corner-stone of the future constitution of India. That there must be the fullest guarantees for the rights and interests of minorities who would judge for themselves what safeguards are necessary for the protection of their rights and interests. The majority should not decide this."

The Congress met in exceptionally difficult circumstances. Ceaseless down-pour of rain made proceedings on the first day impossible. But the Maulana, reckless of wind and weather, opened the Congress with a very brief speech and announced that the resolutions and the amendments would be moved at the next meeting. Even then the skies had by no means a less threatening aspect but the Congress met with fifty thousand people ready to face rain and storm with a will and cheer.

The Maulana did not rush through the amendments. He gave all the movers a free latitude. In about four hours the proceedings were brought to a close.

All the amendments were voted down and the original resolution was passed.

Gandhiji said: "You cannot make me your General on your terms. Know therefore that I will insist on my conditions which are inexorable. You must understand that you have dealt with a dangerous man who may land you in an unexpected situation. Compromise is part and parcel of my nature. I will go to the Viceroy fifty times if I like it."

THE RAMGARH CONGRESS RESOLUTION

The following is the single resolution passed in the open session of the Ramgarh Congress, held in March, 1940.

"This Congress having considered the grave and critical situation resulting from the War in Europe, and the British policy in regard to it approves of and endorses the resolutions passed and the action taken on the War situation by the A-I. C. C. and the Working Committee. The Congress considers the declaration by

the British Government of India and the exploitation of India's resources in this war as an affront to them which no self-respecting and freedom-loving people can accept or tolerate. The recent pronouncements made on bahalf of the British Government in regard to India demonstrate that Great Britian is carrying on the war fundamentally for imperialistic ends and for the preservation and strengthening of her Empire, which is based on the exploitation of the people of India as well as of other Asiatic and African countries ; under these circumstances it is clear that the Congress cannot, in any way, directly or indirectly, be a party to the war which means continuance and perpetuation of this exploitation. The Congress, therefore, strongly disapproves of Indian troops being made to fight for Great Britian and of the drain from India of men and materials for the war. Neither the recruiting nor the money raised in India can be considered to be voluntary contributions from India. Congressmen and those under the Congress influence cannot help in the prosecution of the war with men, money or material.

" The Congress hereby declares again that nothing short of Complete Independence can be accepted by the people of India. Indian freedom cannot exist within the orbit of Imperialism and Dominion Status or any other status within the imperial structure is wholly inapplicable to India, is not in keeping with the dignity of a great nation and would bind India in many ways to British policies and economic structure. The people of India alone can properly shape their own constitution and determine their relations with other countries of the world, through a Constituent Assembly elected on the basis of adult suffrage.

" The Congress is further of opinion that while it will always be ready, as it ever has been, to make every effort to secure communal harmory, no permanent solution is possible except through a Constituent Assembly where the rights of all recognized minorities will be fully protected by agreement, as far as possible, between the elected representatives of various majority and minority groups or by arbitration if agreement is not reached on any point. Any alternative will lack finality. India's constitution must be based on independence, democracy and national unity, and the Congress repudiates attempts to divide India or to split up her nationhood. The Congress has always aimed at a constitution where the fullest freedom and opportunities of development are guaranteed to the group and the individual and social injustice yields place to a just social order.

"The Congress cannot admit the right of the rulers of Indian

States or of foreign vested interests to come in the way of Indian freedom. Sovereignty in India must rest with the people, whether in the States or the provinces and all other interests must be subordinated to their vital interest. The Congress holds that the difficulty raised in regard to the States is of British creation and it will not be satisfactorily solved unless the declaration of the freedom of India from foreign rule is unequivocally made. Foreign interests, if they are not in conflict with the interests of the Indian people, will be protected.

"The Congress withdrew the Ministers from the Provinces where the Congress had a majority in order to dissociate India from the war and to enforce the Congress determination to free India from foreign domination. This preliminary step must naturally be followed by Civil Disobedience to which the Congress will unhesitatingly resort as soon as the its organization is considered fit enough for the purpose, or in case circumstances so shape themselves as to precipitate crisis. The Congress desires to draw the attention of Congressmen to Gandhiji's declaration that he can only undertake the responsibility of declaring Civil Disobedience when he is satisfied that they are strictly observing discipline and are carrying out the constructive programme prescribed in the Independence Pledge.

"The Congress seeks to represent and serve all classes and communities without distinction of race or religion and the struggle for Indian independence is for the freedom of the whole nation. Hence the Congress cherishes the hope that all classes and communities will take part in it. The purpose of Civil Disobedience is to evoke the spirit of sacrifice in the whole nation.

"The Congress hereby authorises the All-India Congress Committee, and in the event of this being necessary, the Working Committee to take all steps to implement the foregoing resolution as the Committee concerned may deem necessary."

THE WAR AND THE CONGRESS

In their glum possessive imperialistic mood the British declared India to be also at war, when they declared War against Germany in September, 1939. They did not stop to think and reckon the possible repercussions of such a complacent decision on their part. They managed to overlook the fact that Indians, though dead set against Nazism, were no less vehemently opposed to British Imperialism. Never in the history of British connection with India was there greater opposition to the policies of the Government than at the outbreak of the World War II.

The declaration of the Viceroy making India belligerent brought out countrywide protests. Four hundred millions of Indians were thus plunged into a war at the arbitrary word of an alien ruler. The Indians asked the British: "If you are fighting this war in defence of democracy and liberation of the enslaved peoples, tell us where we stand. Declare your war aims, and to indicate your earnestness, grant us as a small token, a Provisional National Government at the centre, for the duration of War."

Almost to the last man Indians were bitter opponents of all that Hitlerism stood for. They wanted to enthusiastically join hands in wiping out Hitlerism from the face of earth, but as the British refused this modest demand of Indians the response of Indians to the appeal of the King and the British and the Government of India was reluctant and sullen. India had no faith in the promises of the British, who had been treating with arrogant and contemptuous indifference the legitimate and reasonable political aspirations of India. The British had lost their prestige in the eyes of Indians.

History of the recent past was full of examples showing open defiance of the demand of the Indians, and the constant cleavage between the spoken word, the ideals proclaimed, and the real motives and objectives. Things which would be absolutely unthinkable, in any free country, are not only thinkable but are doable and actually done in India.

The Working Committee met at Wardha on September 8th, and after five days' prolonged discussion issued a lengthy statement surveying the whole war situation and the policy of the British Government towards India. The Committee disapproved the carrying out by Indian people of orders issued by an external authority and called upon the British Government to give immediate effect in India to its professions about democracy to the largest possible extent in order to convince the people of the sincerity of their declaration. The Working Committee invited the British Government to declare in unequivocal terms what their aims were in regard to democracy and imperialism and the new order that was envisaged, in particular, how these aims were going to be applied to India and to be given effect to in the present. This decision was subsequently ratified by the All-India Congress Committee on October 9th. The Viceroy issued a statement on October 18th which shocked the nationalist India. Mahatma Gandhi said, "The Congress asked for bread and it got a stone."

Dr. Rajendra Prasad, President of the Congress, said: "There is no room now left for any one to doubt that the policy remains

what it has always been, and that all talk about democracy and resistance to aggression is not meant to apply to India. The hand of friendship that the Congress had extended to the British people was spurned by the Government." The Congress Working Committee met at Wardha and called upon the Congress Ministers to dissociate themselves from the Government by tendering their resignations. The resignations of the Congress Ministers, in as many as eight provinces out of eleven, after two and a half years of an unbroken record of efficient service, created a first class constitutional crisis in India, and a great sensation in England and elsewhere. The British Government tried to shift the responsibility for the deadlock on the Congress.

The Viceroy soon after the declaration of war interviewed 52 men from all over the country. They belonged to various groups, descriptions and denominations. These series of interviews were intended obviously to impress the outside world especially the United States of America. The net result of all these interviews was nothing else but a further pursuit of 'divide and rule' policy which has ever been the backbone of British rule in India. Mahatma Gandhi said: "I have returned from the Viceregal Lodge empty-handed and without any understanding, open or secret."

Mr. Amery made a very offensive speech in the House of Commons.

THE POONA OFFER

The Working Committee meeting in Delhi passed the following resolution on July 7, 1940, which was confirmed and passed by the All-India Congress Committee at its session held in Poona on July 27th and 28th, 1940:

"The Working Committee are more than ever convinced that the acknowledgment by Great Britain of the complete independence of India is the only solution of the problems facing both India and Britain, and are therefore of opinion that such an unequivocal declaration should be immediately made, and that as an immediate step in giving effect to it, a provisional national government should be constituted at the centre which though formed as a transitory measure, should be such as to command the confidence of all the elected elements in the Central Legislature and secure the closest co-operation of the Responsible Government in the provinces. The Working Committee declare that if these measures are adopted it will enable the Congress to throw on its full weight in the efforts for the effective organization of the defence of the country. Otherwise the defence cannot in any

sense be voluntary or as from a free country, and will, therefore, be ineffective." It went to the greatest extent to which the Congress could possibly go to co-operate with the Government.

The national demand was pitched at the lowest even though there was much opposition to this by the socialists and the communists.

In the first time there was a parting of ways between the Congress and the Mahatmaji. The Congress did all this to throw in its lot with the Allies and use all Indian resources to fight the menace of Fascism and Nazism to which it was deadly opposed, if that helped in any way the preservation of democracy and liberation of its own land.

THE AUGUST OFFER

The British rejected this offer of co-operation and instead of securing the fullest support of the Congress, the Viceroy made the following statement in August, 1940 :

" During the earlier part of the year I continued my efforts to bring political parties together. It is clear that the differences which had prevented the achievement of national unity remain unbridged.

" His Majesty's Government has decided that the Executive Council be expanded and has authorised me to invite a certain number of representative Indians to join my Executive Council and to establish a War Advisory Council which would contain representatives of the Indian States and of interests in the national life of India as a whole.

" His Majesty's Government is anxious that full weight should be given to the views of the minorities in any revision of the constitution.

" There has been very strong insistence that framing of a new constitutional scheme for India should be primarily the responsibility of Indians themselves and should originate from Indian conceptions of the social, economic and political structure of Indian life."

CONGRESS RESOLUTION ON VICEROY'S OFFER

The Congress Working Committee at its meeting at Wardha passed the following resolution on the Viceregal declaration :

" The Working Committee have read, with pain and indignation, the declarations and assumptions contained in the speeches

made on behalf of the British Government which seek to deny India her natural right of complete national freedom and reiterate the untenable claim that Britain should maintain herself in a dominant position in India in the discharge of the higher functions of the state. These claims render false and empty even their own promise to recognise India at an early date as a free and equal unit within the British Commonwealth.

" The Working Committee cannot but conclude that the attitude and assertions contained in these statements made on behalf of the British Government confirm the prevailing feeling that the British authority has been continually operating so as to create, maintain and aggravate differences in India's national life.

"The Working Committee note with astonishment that the demand for the constitution of a Provisional Government has been described by the Secretary of State as one that would raise the unsolved constitutional issue and prejudice it in favour of majority and against the minorities.

"The Working Committee have come to the conclusion that the statements referred to are wholly opposed not only to the principle of democracy as acclaimed by the British Government in their war aims but also to the best interests of India and they cannot be a party to accepting the proposals contained in the statement or advising the country to accept them.

"The Working Committee call upon the people to condemn the attitude adopted by the British Government by means of public meetings and otherwise as also through their elected representatives in the Provincial Legislatures."

Mahtama Gandhi made the following statement on the Viceroy's offer :

" The Viceregal pronouncement is deeply distressing. It widens the gulf between India as represented by the Congress and England. Thinking India, outside the Congress, has not welcomed the pronouncement. It does not dispel suspicion, neither does the pronouncement take note of the smouldering discontentment. My own fear is that democracy is being wrecked. Britain cannot claim to stand for justice, if she fails to be just to India. India's disease is too deep to yield to any make-believe or half-hearted measures."

Pandit Nehru said :

" The Congress must fight on. We cannot compromise with Imperialism."

Shriyut Rajagopalachariar made the following sporting offer:

"In answer to Amery's difficulty as to the minorities I may make a sporting offer, that if His Majesty's Government will agree to a Provisional National Government being formed at once. I undertake to persuade my colleagues in the Congress to agree to the Muslim League being invited to nominate the Prime Minister and let him form a National Government, as he would consider best. If there is sincerity in the difficulty felt by His Majesty's Government, it should be met by what I offer."

On August 29th, the Viceroy had said:

"I trust Congress will help." But Azad replied: "There is no meeting ground. Apart from other fundamental questions there is not even any suggestion for a National Government. In these circumstances I am unable to find any scope for further discussion."

The Congress felt badly let down. It had openly disagreed with Gandhiji, expressed its inability to extend the principle of non-violence to India's National defence, and had set forth the conditions, which would enable it to throw its full weight into the effort for an effective organisation of the defence of the country.

Mahatma Gandhi said that the Congress would do nothing to embarrass Great Britain. He said: "She will be embarrassed if there is anarchy in India." That the Congress so long as it is under my discipline will not support. What the Congress cannot do is lend its moral influence to Britian."

The All-India Congress Committee met at Bombay on September 15, 1940. Mahatma Gandhi said:

"I may tell you that I am not anxious to go to Jail. Of course it is open to the Government to lock me up any time they like. I wish to make it clear that we don't wish ill to British. We don't want her to be defeated. A satyagrahi does not believe in taking advantage of the weakness of his opponent. The Congress claims for itself the freedom to protect civil liberty in this country. There is no question of Mass Civil Disobedience. I am still thinking of something but I have not yet seen the light."

The following resolution was passed by the A.-I. C. C.:

"The All-India Congress Committee cannot submit to a policy which is a denial of India's natural right to freedom, which suppresses the free expression of public opinion, and which would

lead to the degradation of her people, and their continued enslavement. By following this policy the British Government have created an intolerale situation and are imposing upon the Congress a struggle for the preservation of their honour and their elementary rights. They can have no ill-will against the British nation and the spirit of Satyagraha forbids the Congress from doing anything with a view to embarrass them. But the self-imposed restraint cannot be taken to the extent of self-extinction. The Committee requests Mahatma Gandhi to guide the country."

Mahatma Gandhi said "There is enough room for compromise in their resolution. I shall go to the Viceroy with the resolution and ask him if the present situation is not such as will lead to the extinction of the Congress ? "

Gandhiji returned a disappointed man. He decided to do something as a symbolic protest against all these irksome restrictions and he chalked out a plan of individual Satyagraha.

THE INDIVIDUAL SATYAGRAHA

On October 17, 1940, individual satyagraha commenced and Vinobha Bhave was the first nominee. He addressed a meeting in the village of Panaur.

Pandit Nehru was to follow him but he was arrested on October 31, 1940, and was sentenced to 4 years' imprisonment.

This campaign was of a most restricted character so that the British Government might not be embarrassed in their hour of trial. The list of satyagrahis was religiously scrutinised and sifted to eliminate those who did not fully conform to the strict tests set by Mahatma Gandhi. They were to send a written notice to the District Magistrate, that they intended delivering a speech. They were clapped into prison before they made any speech. The movement was on the issue of ' freedom of speech'.

The campaign went on smoothly for 14 months. There was no attempt direct or indirect to interfere with the Government's war effort.

All those who had offered Satyagraha in this manner in the Panjab were subsequently released because the High Court of Panjab held that the prosecutions were not valid at all. Moreover, with the war drawing nearer to India, it was imperative that the true leaders of the masses should no longer be held behind the bars.

The expansion of the Viceroy's Council was a mockery The un-official majority on the expanded Council was illusive utterly ineffective and wholly unrepresentative.

It was a change from drifting to bungling. Even as an eye-wash it was perfectly useless, if not positively hurting and injurious.

On August 1, in the House of Commons' Amery emphatically stated that the transfer of power and authority was not feasible. There was great danger threatening. India was not a country as there was a Belgium or a Holland for instance, and in many respects India is much more like Europe than it was like an individual country. Thus he patted the separationists on the back.

THE ATLANTIC CHARTER

On August 15, 1941, after the historic meeting between Churchill and Roosevelt somewhere in the Atlantic, the eight-point declaration addressed to all the peoples of the world was announced with great pride and elation. The European countries saw their liberty and salvation in the Atlantic Charter, but the subject peoples of Asia and Africa, read in it the glooming perpetuation of their political status. Mr. Churchill did not think this Charte to be applicable to India though Mr. Attlee Deputy Prime Minister at that time had stated "The declaration will be equally applicable to all races including Asiatics and Africans." In India the Charter had been condemned by everybody except Mr. Jinnah. Gandhiji when asked to express his opinion, said that ' his silence was more eloquent.'

There was no change in the policy of the Government of India or of Britain. Mr. Amery, a past master in the art of blaming Indians, carried on his vilifying campaign. It so much irritated the Indian leaders that Pandit Nehru said, 'Get out Amery' and declared his opinion that there can be no compromise between India and England as long as Amery was at the helm of affairs. The Congress Working Committee met at Bardoli on December 30, 1941 and passed a resolution relieving Gandhiji of his responsibility and declaring its readiness to co-operate in the war effort if certain conditions were satisfied. It was made clear that the opening of the door lay with the Government.

The All-India Congress Committee met at Wardha on January 15, 1942. The Bardoli resolution was confirmed. Gandhiji asked the members to accept the resolution and expressed his willingness to relinquish the leadership of the Congress.

THE CRIPPS OFFER

The war was approaching the gates of India. Singapore had fallen, Rangoon had been evacuated, the Japanese descent on the

Far East was sudden and swift. Japan's position was becoming formidable if not invincible. The occupation of the Straits Settlements, Malayan States and Burma, by the Japanese, created a general panic in this country.

There were uproars and angry protests in the British Parliament and in America against British policy in India which now remained the only base for operations against the Eastern Army. The Labour and Liberal statesmen in Britain severely censured the government for its policy in India, and urged His Majesty's Government to take immediate steps for a re-orientation of their policy and to conciliate India.

Said a liberal member of the Parliament.

" Do not let it be said that we succeeded in India too late. Why should we not find another Lord Durham and send him to India with full powers to try goodwill to solve the urgent and vital problems of India."

At last the widespread agitation in England had its effect and the obstinate Churchill government had to bow down to the will of the nation. It was not merely a concession to America or Chinese pressure or to clamourings among his own people. It was a move to appease a rebellious subject nation when the geo-political situation of the British had deteriorated and when its chief instrument of armed might, the navy was no longer able to hold its own against the huge power of other land powers.

On March 12, 1942, Churchill announced that Sir Stafford Cripps, Lord Privy Seal was flying to India to seek the assent of the people to the War Cabinet's proposals which were in the opinion of the cabinet a just and final solution of the Indian problem. Cripps arrived at New Delhi on March 23rd, 1942. He stayed at the Viceroy's house for two days where he met all the Governors and members of the Viceroy's Executive Council, After that he moved to a private residence. Here he met the leaders of the different political parties and appraised them of the terms of the Declaration which were as follows :

" Immediately upon the cessation of hostilities steps should be taken to set up in India an elected body charged with the task of framing a new costitution for India. His Majesty's Government undertake to accept and implement forthwith the constitution so framed subject only to.

(*i*) The right of any province of British India that is not prepared to accept the new constitution to retain its present

constitutional position, provision being made for its subsequent accession if it so decides.

(*ii*) The signing of a treaty which shall be negotiated between His Majesty's Government, and the constitution-making body.

"During the critical period which now faces India and until the new constitution can be framed, His Majesty's Government must inevitably bear the responsibility for and retain control and direction of India as part of the world war effort, but the task of organizing to the full the military, moral and materal resources must be the responsibility of the Government of India with the co-operation of the people of India.

"His Majesty's Government desire and invite the immediate and effective participation of the leaders of the principal sections of the Indian people in the counsels of their country, of the Commonwealth, and of the United nations. Thus they will be enabled to give their active and constructive help in the discharge of a task which is vital and essential for the future freedom of India."

At the Press Conference Sir Cripps made it clear that the British Government had no mental reservations. The intention of the Government as far as possible subject to the reservation of defence is to put power in the hands of the Indian leaders.

The reactions to the proposals were widely divergent. The Working Committee of the Congress passed the following resolutions:

"The Working Committee have given their full and earnest consideration to the proposals made by the British War Cabinet in regard to India and the elucidation thereof by Sir Stafford Cripps. These proposals which have been made at the very last hour, because of the compulsion of events have to be considered not only in their relation to India's demand for independence but more especially in the present grave war crisis with a view to meeting effectively the perils and dangers that confront India and envelop the world.

"The Congress has repeatedly stated ever since the commencement of the war in September 1939, that people of India would line themselves with the progressive forces of the world and assume full responsibility to face the new problems and shoulder the new burdens that had arisen and it asked for the necessary conditions to enable them to do so to be created. The people of India have as a whole clearly demanded full independence and the Congress has declared that no other status except that of independence for the whole of India could be agreed to or

could meet the essential requirements of the present situation. The Committee recognises that future independence may be implicit in proposals but the accompanying provisions and restrictions are such that real freedom may well become an illusion. For the present the British War Cabinet's proposals are vague and altogether incomplete and it would appear that no vital changes in the present structure are contemplated. The Committee would repeat that an essential and fundamental prerequisite for the assumption of responsibility by the Indian people in the present is their realisation as a fact that they are free and are in charge of maintaining and defending their freedom. It is manifest that the present Government of India as well as its provincial agencies are lacking in competence and are incapable of shouldering the burden of popular representatives, as that can only be done by present freedom and full responsibility being cast upon them. The Committee are unable to accept these proposals."

Subhas Bose had left India and the fall of Burma speculation was rife in all quarters that Japanese army under Subhas Bose's command was going to liberate India. In an article in *Harijan* Mahatma Gandhi wrote : " I have no desire whatsoever to woe any power to help India in her endeavour to free herself from the foreign yoke. I have no desire to exchange the British for any other rule. Better the enemy I know, than the one I do not, therefore, there can be no question of my approval of Subhas's policy. He is misguided and his way can never lead to India's deliverance.

" I want to resist with all my might the charge of inviting Japan to India. I want India to oppose Japan to a man.

" I am more interested than the British in keeping the Japanese away, for Britain's defeat in Indian waters may mean only the loss of India but if Japan wins India loses everything."

In an article written on April 19, 1942, which appeared in *Harijan* on April 26th, Gandhiji first gave public expression to the theory which was to crystallize into "Quit India" movement. Mahatmaji wrote there that, if the British were to leave India to her fate as they had to leave Singapore, non-violent India would lose nothing and Japan would probably leave India alone. Whatever the consquences, therefore, to India, her weal, safety and Britain's too, lie in orderly and timely British withdrawal from India.

Mahatmaji wrote : " The presence of the British in India is an invitation to Japan to invade India. The withdrawal removes the bait." In another article he wrote :

"In this struggle every risk has to be run in order to cure ourselves of the biggest disease—a disease which has sapped our manhood and almost made us feel as if we must be for ever slaves. It is an unsufferable thing. The cost of the cure, I know, will be heavy. No price is too heavy to pay for the deliverance." In reply to a question whether Mahatmaji envisaged FreeIndia, he said " I do. It will be only then that you will see real co-operation."

He never contemplated the complete shifting of Allied troops from India. Mahatma Gandhi wrote in *Harijan*

"It has been pointed out that not to consent to the Allied troops remaining in India during their period of war is to hand over India and China to Japan and to ensure the defeat of the Allied powers. This could never have been contempleted by me. My proposals presuppose shedding of all fear and distrust. If we have confidence in ourselves we need neither fear nor suspect the presence of Allied troops.

"The British acceptance of my proposals may itself lead to a most honourable peace and hence automatic withdrawal of troops. The implications of my proposals are :

1. India becomes free from all financial obligations.

2. The annual drain to Great Britain stops automatically.

3. All taxation ceases except which the replacing government imposes or retains.

4. The deadweight of an all powerful authority keeping under subjection the tallest in the land is lifted at once.

5. India begins a new chapter in her national life as I shall hope to affect the fortunes of the war with non-violence as her predominant sanctions.

" All this may not come to pass. I do not mind. It is worth fighting for ; it is worth stakting all that the nation has."

The Congress Working Committee met at Wardha on July 6. Gandhiji explained his views and proposals.

The Committee released on 14th July a 1,700 word resolution demanding withdrawal of the British from India :

" Events happening from day-to-day and experiences that the people of India are passing through, confirm the opinion of Congressmen that British rule in India must end immediately not only because foreign domination, even at its best, is an evil in itself but because India in bondage can play no effective part in defending

herself and in affecting the fortune of the war that is dessolating humanity. The freedom of India is thus necessary not only in the interests of India but also for the safety of the world and for the ending of the Nazism, Fascism, Militarism, and other forms of Imperialism and the aggression of one nation over another.

"The Committee hold that Japanese aggression must be resisted, for any submission to it must mean the degradation of the Indian people and the continuation of their subjection.

" The Congress would change the present ill-will against British into goodwill and make India a willing partner in a joint enterprise of securing freedom for the nations and peoples of the world and in the trials and tribulations which accompany it. This is only possible if India feels the glory of freedom.

" It is the earnest desire of the Congress to enable India to resist aggression effectively, with the peoples' united will and strength behind it.

" In making the proposal for the wit-hdrawal of British rule the Congress has no desire whatever to embarrass Great Britan or Allied powers in the prosecution of war. The congress is therefore, agreeable to the stationing of the armed forces of the Allies in India, should they so desire, in order to ward and resist the Japanese aggression and to protect and help China.

The Congress will be reluctantly compelled to utilize all the non-violent strength it might have gathered since 1920 when it adopted non-violence as a part of its policy, for the vindication of political rights and liberty."

When asked as to whether the Congress was prepared to negotiate on the matter, Mahatma Gandhi said: "There is no room for negotiation in the proposals and withdrawal. Either they recognise Independence or they don't." Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad said : ' It refers to India's right of independence. It is certainly not a matter for negotiation. It is a fundamental principle which must be recognised by the United Nations."

Mahatma Gandhi gave a strong warning to the Japanese on July 18th.

" I must confess at the outset that though I have no ill-feeling against you I intensely dislike your attack upon China.

"If I were a free man and if you allowed me to come to your country, frail though I am, I would not mind risking my health, may be my life, to come to your country to plead with you to desist from the wrong that you are doing to China and the

world and therefore to yourself. Ours is an unarmed revolt against British rule. An important party in the country is engaged in a deadly but friendly quarrel with the foreign rulers.

"If we are to believe your reported anxiety for the independence of India, a recognition of that independence by Britain, should leave you no excuse for any attack on India.

"I don't know you enough to be able to judge. All I have read tells me that you listen to no appeal but to that of sword. I have an unabiding faith in the responsiveness of human nature. On the strength of that faith I have conceived the impending movement in India and it is that faith which has prompted this appeal to you."

Mahatma Gandhi wrote to American friends, "I assert that I would not have asked my country to invite great Britain to withdraw her rule from India if I had not seen at once that for the sake of Great Britain and the Allied cause it was necessary for Britain boldly to perform the duty of freeing India from bondage. By that supreme act of justice Britain would have taken away all cause for the seething discontent of India.

"You will do a grievous wrong to the Allied cause if you do not sift the truth from the chaff, whilst there is yet time. Just think of it. Is there anything wrong in the Congress demanding the conditional recognition of India's independence."

ALL-INDIA CONGRESS COMMITTEE MEETING

The All-India Congress Committee met in Bombay on the 7th August, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad presided, in his opening address he said:

"The menace of aggression to India was ever-increasing and the danger which was only a distant one months ago was fast approaching them. The Congress wanted to see that every Indian youth took part in resisting aggression.

"The "Quit India" demand does not mean the physical removal of all the Britishers from India but it means the transfer of charge."

After the Maulana, Mahatma Gandhi addressed the meeting.

"The Congress represents the whole of India. It has claimed ever since its birth to represent the whole nation.

"This is a crucial hour. If we keep quiet and don't play our part, it would not be right on our part.

" The resolution that is placed before you says that we don't want to remain frogs in a well. We are arriving at World Federation. It can come only through non-violence. Disarmament is only possible if you use the matchless weapon of non-violence.

" I am a real bania and my business is to obtain Swaraj. If you don't accept this resolution, I won't be sorry for it, on the contrary I would dance with joy because you would relieve me of the tremendous responsibility which you are now going to place on me. I want you to accept it in whole and stick to it when you join the struggle."

Pandit Jawaharlal moved the important resolution and observed :

"The resolution was in no sense a challenge to any one. If the British government accepted the proposal it would change the position for the better both internal and international, from every point of view. Whatever change might come about in India it must be for the better. Mahatma Gandhi had agreed that British and other foreign armed forces stationed in India might continue. This was in order not to allow the Japanese to come in."

Sardar Patel in seconding the resolution said :

" If America and England were still thinking that they could fight their enemies from India without the co-operation of 400 millions of people they were foolish. It must dawn on the people that this war was a peoples' war and they should fight for their country and their freedom."

"What kind of government other than a puppet government is ruling us now.

" The fight before you is going to be a tough one."

When the Committee reassembled on the 8th a number of amendments were moved.

Pandit Jawaharlal replied to the debate and said:

" This resolution is not a threat. It is an invitation. It is an explanation. It is an offer of co-operation. But still behind it there is a clear indication that certain consequences will follow if certain events do not happen. It is an offer of co-operation of a free India. On any other terms there will be no co-operation but conflict and struggle."

The Congress President put the various amendments to vote These were either withdrawn or rejected. The following resolution was passed by an overshelming majority. Only 12 members voted against it.

"The All-India Congress Committee has given the most careful consideration to the reference made to it by the Working Committee in their resolution dated July 14, 1942, and to subsequent events including the development of the war situation, the utterances of responsible spokesmen of the British government, and the comments and criticism made in India and abroad. The Committee approves of and endorses that resolution and is of opinion that events subsequent to it have given it further justification and have made it clear that the immediate ending of British rule in India is an urgent necessity both for the sake of India and for the success of the United Nations. The continuation of that rule is degrading and enfeebling India and making her progressively less capable cf defending herself and of contributing to the cause of world freedom.

"The Committee has viewed with dismay the deterioration of the situation on the Russian and Chinese fronts and convey to Russsian and Chinese peoples its high appreciation of their heroism in defence of their freedom. This increasing peril makes it incumbent on all those who strive for freedom and who sympathise with the victims of aggression, to examine the foundations of the policy so far pursued by the Allied Nations, which have led to repeated and disastrous failure. It is not by adhering to such aims and policies and methods that failure can be converted into success, for past experience has shown that failure is inherent in them. These policies have been based not on freedom so much as on the domination of subject and colonial countries and the continuation of the Imperialist tradition and method. The possession of Empire. instead of adding to the strength of the ruling power has become a burden and a curse. India the classic land of modern Imperialism has become the crux of the question, for by the freedom of India will Britain and the United Nations be judged and the people of Asia and Africa be filled with hope and enthusiasm.

"The ending of British rule in this country is thus a vital and immediate issue on which depend the future of the war and the success of freedom and democracy. A free India will assure this success by throwing all her great resources in the struggle for freedom and against the aggression for Nazism, Fascism and Imperialism. This will not only affect materially the fortunes of the war, but will bring all subject and oppressed humanity on the side of the United Nations, and give these nations whose ally India would be the moral and spiritual leadership of the world. India in bondage will continue to be the symbol of British Imperialism and the taint of that Imperialism will affect the fortunes of the United Nations.

" The peril of today therefore necessitates the Independence of India and the ending of British domination. No future promises or guarantees can affect the present situation or meet that peril. They cannot produce the needed psychological effect on the mind of the masses. Only the glow of freedom now can release that energy and enthusiasm of millions of people which will immediately transform the nature of the war.

The All-India Congress Committee repreats with all emphasis the demand for the withdrawal of the British power from India. On the declaration of India's independence a Provisional Government will be formed, and free India will become an ally of the United Nations sharing with them, in the trials and tribulations of the joint enterprise of the struggle for freedom.

" The provisional government can only be formed by the co-operation of the principal parties and groups in the country. It will thus be a composite Government representative of all important sections of the people of India. Its primary functions must be to defend India and resist aggression with all the armed as well as the violent forces at its command together with its Allied powers and to promote the well-being and progress of the workers in the fields and factories and elsewhere to whom essentially all power and authority must belong. The provisional government will evolve a scheme for a Constituent Assembly which will prepare a constitution for the Government of India, acceptable to all sections of the people. This constitution according to the Congress view should be a Federal one, with the largest measure of autonomy for the federating units and with the residuary powers vesting in these units. The future relations between India and the Allied Nations will be adjusted by representatives of all these free countries conferring together for their mutual advantage and for their co-operation in the common task of resisting aggression. Freedom will enable India to resist aggression effectively with the people's united will and strength behind it.

"The freedom of India must be the symbol of and prelude to the freedom of all other Asiatic nations under foreign domination. Burma, Malaya, Indo-China and Dutch Indies, Iran and Iraq must also attain their complete freedom. It must be clearly understood that such of these countries as are under Japanese control now must not subsequently be placed under the rule or control of any other Colonial power.

" While the A.I.C.C. must primarily be concerned with the independence and defence of India, in this hour of danger, the Committee is of opinion that the future peace, security and ordered

progress of the world demand a world federation of free nations and on no other basis can the problems of the modern world be solved. Such a world federation would ensure the freedom of its constituent nations, the prevention of aggression and exploitation by one nation over another, the protection of national minorities, the advancement of all backward areas and peoples and the pooling of the world's resources for the common good of all. On the establishment of such a world federation disarmament would be practicable in all countries, national armies, navies and air forces would no longer be necessary and world federal defence force would keep the world peace and prevent aggression.

"An Independent India would gladly join such a world federation and co-operate on an equal basis with other countries in the solution of international problems.

"Such a federation should be open to all nations who agree with its fundamental principles. In view of the war, however, the federation must inevitably to begin with, be confined to the United Nations. Such a step taken now will have a most powerful effect on the war, on the peoples of the Axis countries, and on the peace to come.

"The Committee regretfully realises, however, that despite the tragic and overwhelming lessons of the war and the perils that overhang the world, the Governments of few countries are not yet prepared to take this inevitable step towards world federation. The reactions of the British government and the misguided criticisms of the foreign Press also make it clear that even the obvious demand for Indian independence is resisted, though this has been made essentially to meet the present peril, and to enable India to defend herself and to help China and Russia in their hour of need. The Committee is anxious not to embarrass in any way the defence of China or Russia whose freedom is precious and must be preserved or to jeopardize the defensive capacity of the United Nations. But the peril grows both to India and these nations and inaction and submission to a foreign administration at this stage is not only degrading India and reducing her capacity to defend herself and resist aggression but is no answer to that growing peril and is no service to the people of the United Nations. The earnest appeal of the Working Committee to Great Britain and the United Nations has so far met with no response, and the criticisms made in many foreign quarters have shown an ignorance of India's and the world need, some times even hostility to India's superiority which is significant of a mentality of domination and racial superiority which

cannot be tolerated by a proud people conscious of their strength and of the justice of their causes.

The A.I.C.C. would yet again at this last moment in the interest of world freedom renew this appeal to Britain and the United Nations. But the Committee feels that it is no longer justified in holding the nation back from endeavouring to assert its will against an imperialist and authoritarian Government which dominates over it and prevents it from functioning in its own interest and in the interest of humanity.

"The Committee resolves therefore to sanction for the vindication of India's inalienable right to freedom and independence, the starting of a mass struggle on non-violent lines on the widest possible scale so that the country might utilize all the non-violent strength it has gathered during the last 22 years of peaceful struggle. Such a struggle must inevitably be under the leadership of Gandhiji and the Committee requests him to take the lead and guide the nation in the steps to be taken.

"The Committee appeals to the people of India to face the dangers and hardships that will fall to their lot with courage and endurance and to hold together under the leadership of Gandhiji and carry out his instructions as disciplined soldiers of Indian freedom. They must remember that non-violence is the basis of this movement. A time may come when it may not be possible to issue instructions or, for instructions to reach our people and when no Congress Committees can function. When this happens, every man or woman who is participating in this movement must function for himself or herself, within the four corners of the general instructions issued. Every Indian who desires freedom and strives for it must be his own guide, urging him on along the hard road where there is no resting place and which leads ultimately to the independence and deliverance of India.

"Lastly, whilst the A.I.C.C. has stated its own view of the future government under free India, the A.I.C.C. wishes to make it quite clear to all concerned that by embarking on mass struggle it has no intention of gaining power for the Congress. The power, when it comes will belong to the whole people of India."

It was 6 p. m. Saturday evening when Mahatma Gandhi ascended the rostrum. The eyes and ears of the world were riveted on that scene of August 8, 1942, at the Gowalia Tank Maidan, Bombay. Nothing in the history of the Congress had roused so much interest. Both the allied and the Axis nations were excited to know what Mahatmaji would say and how he

would steer the proceedings. He had uttered a historic phrase, sounded a call to non-violent arms and administered a warning broadcast to all corners of the globe. His "Quit India" solgan was a bullet which reached the very heart of the ruling race.

He spoke for 120 minutes in English and Hindustani. It was indeed a memorable speech. It was the charter of liberty, the quintessence of the philosophy of non-violence, the final and unanswerable indictment of British rule in this country, the symbol of friendship with China, Russia and every oppressed people of the world and a word of glorious encouragement to real and true friends all over the globe who were ready to cherish friendships transcending barriers of race and isolation. It was a rousing call to the dormant soul of Hindustan and to every man and woman who cherished liberty.

Mahatma Gandhi ended his speech with this solemn and stern warning:—

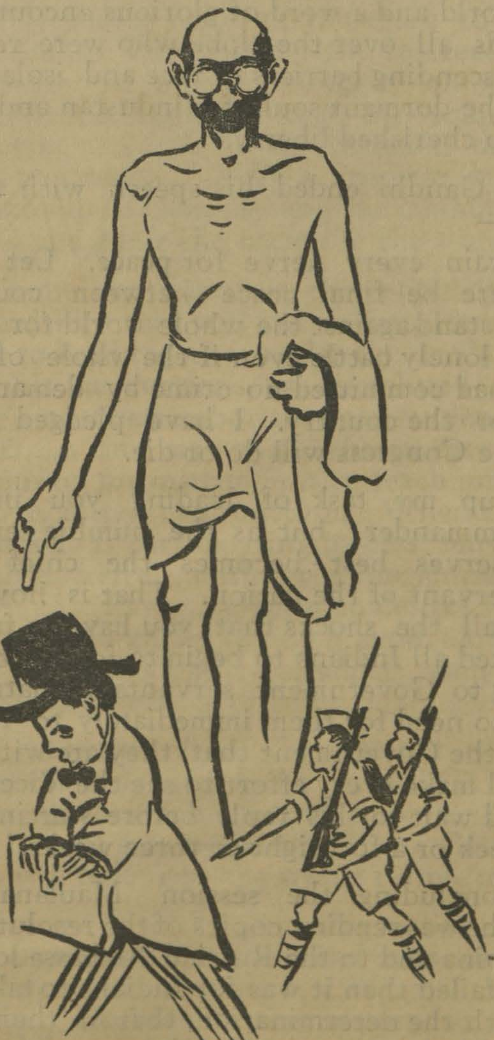
"I shall strain every nerve for peace. Let there be final peace. Let there be final peace between countries. I will not be afraid to stand against the whole world for God is with us. I shall wage my lonely battle even if the whole of India forsakes me. Congress had committed no crime by demanding Complete Independence for the country. I have pledged my support to Congress and the Congress will do or die.

"I take up my task of leading you in this struggle not as your commander, but as the humble servant of you all. And he who serves best becomes the chief among them. I am the chief servant of the nation. That is how I look at it. I want to share all the shocks that you have to face." Mahatma Gandhi then asked all Indians to begin to feel that they are free men. Referring to Government servants, Mahatma Gandhi said that there was no need for them immediately to resign but they should write to the Government that they are with the Congress. He said, "I shall make every effort to see the Viceroy or address a letter to him and wait for his reply before starting the struggle. It may take a week or a fortnight or three weeks."

Before concluding the session Maulana Abul Kalam announced that he was sending copies of the resolution to President Roosevelt, to China and to the Russian Ambassador in London. If all their efforts failed then it was for Indians to take a determined step forward with the determination, that in their struggle they would venture ahead no matter what happened to them, whether they sink or swim, whether they win or lose.

The session then concluded at 10 p. m.

Mahatma Gandhi when asked if the movement would not hamper War efforts of the United Nations said, "The movement is intended not only to help China but also to make common cause with the Allies."



Britishers Get-out

CHAPTER XXI

The Swaraj Party

IN 1920 the Congress adopted a programme of triple boycott, *i.e.*, boycott of Colleges, Courts and Councils. Deshbandhu Das very emphatically opposed the item of boycott of Councils. At the 1919 session of the Congress he had sponsored a resolution declaring the Montague Chelmsford Reform as dis appointing, inadequate and unsatisfactory and therefore with a view to wreck the reforms, he was of opinion that the Congress-men should enter the Councils and make it impossible for them co function. When Mahatmaji suspended non-co-operation, this question assumed much greater prominence and importance. Desh-bandhu wished to convert the Congress held in 1922 to his view but as he failed to do so, with the co-operation of Pandit Motilal he founded the Swaraj Party. The Congress thus had two wings, Pro-changers and No-changers. Deshbandhu resigned the President-ship of the Congress, to be free to carry on propaganda in favour of Council entry. Lala Lajpat Rai on his release from jail, joined this party. Elections in the name of this party were cantested for the first legislatures under the Reforms Act. This Swaraj Party had to face the opposition of "No-changers" and the rift grew rather wider. In 1924 a special session was held at Delhi under the Presidentship of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and a workable compromise was arrived at. On the release of Mahatma Gandhi both of these gentlemen had prolonged discussions with Mahatmaji but they agreed to differ and seperate statements were issued. The bitterness in relations between Pro-changers and No-changers disappeared.

In 1925 the Congress adopted Council entry as its programme and in 1926 elections were fought in the name of the Congress, but another calamity faced the Congress. Deshbandhu Das had departed from this world and Lala Lajpat

Rai and Pandit Motilal did not agree on certain vital points Lala Lajpat Rai and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya opposed the official Congress candidates. Madras was unaffected but there was a very crushing defeat of the Congress candidates in the Punjab. The late lamented and highly revered leader Lala Duni Chand was opposed by Bakhshi Tek Chand who was supported by Lala Lajpat Rai, and Dr. Gopi Chand and others. Lala Duni Chand was President of the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee and his defeat at the polls gave a serious set-back to the Congress work in the Punjab specially because the main item of propaganda against Congress was that it had sold its conscience to Mohammedans and that Congressmen are in favour of cow-slaughter and are encouraging Mohammadans to establish an independent Muslim state in the Punjab.

The Congress then engaged itself in Civil Disobedience Campaign of 1930 and 1931. And in 1935 this programme was revived and since then with unavoidable breaks, it is the principal if not the sole item on the programme of the Congress.

PARLIAMENTARY BOARD

The policy of the Congress towards the Reforms contained in the new Government of India Act of 1935 was embodied in a resolution passed by the open session in Bombay.

It stated that the White Paper did not express the will of the people of India and had been condemned by all the Indian political parties. It fell far short of the Congress goal, if it did not actually retard the progress towords it. It stated that the only satisfactory alternative to the White Paper was a constitution drawn up by a Constituent Assembly. This new Government of India Act was more reactionary and retrograde than the recommendations contained in J.P.C. report. But the Congress decided to contest elections and Parliamentary Board was reconstituted. It consisted of 29 members, of whom 25 were elected by the A.-I.C.C. and the remaining 4 were co-opted by the latter. Shriyut Bhulabhai Desai was elected as President of the Board.

The general elections to the Legislative Assembly were held soon after the Bombay Congress and 24 members were returned on behalf of the Congress. The Congress captured all seats in Madras, Bihar, Orissa, U.P. and C.P. Shriyut Bhulabhai was elected Chairman and leader of the Congress Assembly Party

PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE

The Working Committee at its meeting at Wardha resolved that a Parliamentary Committee be constituted to take such steps as may be necessary in connection with organisation of elections to the legislatures. Sardar Patel was elected as its Chairman and Shriyut Rajendra Prasad and Pandit Gobind Ballabh Pant were elected as secretaries. An Executive Committee of 11 persons was formed to carry on the work.

This Committee prepared a pledge to be signed by every person who wished to stand as a Congress candidate. He had to promise that he would follow the principles and policy laid down by the Congress and to conform to the rules and directions issued by that body.

The Working Committee held on Febraury 27th, 28th and March 1st, 1937, congratulated the nation on its wonderful response to the call of the Congress during the recent elections, demonstrating the adherence of the masses to the Congress policy and their firm determination to combat the new constitution and end it, and by means of a Constituent Assembly to establish an independent and democratic state and remove the many burdens under which all sections of our people suffer.

The Working Committee wishes to declare that the taking of oath in order to enable participation in the work of the legislatures in no way lessens or varies the demand for independence. The primary allegiance of all Congressmen as well as all other Indians is to the Indian people and the oath of allegiance does not affect in any way this primary duty and allegiance.

The Committee trusts there will be a nation-wide hartal or general strike on April 1. The All-India Congress Committee passed the following resolution :

"The declared policy of the Congress was to combat the New Act and end it. The Committee therefore demands on behalf of the people of India that the new constitution be withdrawn."

THE ALL-INDIA CONVENTION

It was decided that a Subjects Committee consisting of the leaders, secretaries and other office-bearers of the Congress parties in the Central and Provincial Legislatures with a certain number of members of the A-I.C.C. be formed to discuss the procedure to be adopted and the resolutions to be moved at the All-India Convention.

This was held at Delhi on March 19th and 20th, 1937. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru presided. He administered the oath of allegiance to the members of the Convention. It was an impressive and solemn ceremony.

The question of office acceptance was thoroughly discussed and finally it was decided to form provincial ministries whereever the Congress party was in majorty, provided the Governors gave an assurance that they would not interfere with the day-to-day working of the ministers. This assurance having been given the Congress Ministries were formed in eight provinces. These did very good work till Congress withdrew all its co-operation from the Government because of its refusal to accept the most modest demand of setting up a Provisional National Government at the Centre.

THE WORK OF THE CONGRESS PARTY IN THE CENTRAL LEGISLATURE

1. The Budget session for the year 1938-39 opened with an adjournment motion from the Congress Party to censure the official policy of mechanisation of the British section of the Indian Army.

2. The Congress Party criticised the Railway Board for neglecting the comforts of passengers and the welfare of the Railway employees and for its attitude of studied indifference towards Indian Commerce and Industry. It censured the Government for their failure to Indianise completely the Railway services. The Congress Party moved a number of resolutions on various topics of interest and importance during the session and supported various non-official bills. The Congress Party and especially its leader Mr. Bhulabhai Desai voiced vigorous opposition to the Criminal Law Amendment Bill. He analysed the present 'Prestige and worth' of British Empire and said that the Empire whose foreign policy was characterised by political treachery was not worth fighting for. The Bill was passed with the support of the members of the Moslem League.

During the session an adjournment motion was carried censuring the Government for setting up a new memorial of Badli Ki Sarai battle about 6 miles from Delhi under the official auspices for the inscription on which, described in insulting language, men who fought for their freedom in 1857.

MINISTERIAL RESIGNATIONS IN U. P. AND BIHAR

One of the first acts of the Congress Ministeries on assuming the responsibilities of office was to pass orders for the release of political prisoners. The Congress was by its election manifesto pledged to their release and while most of them were released, some were left behind in U. P. and Bihar jails. The Governors declined to endorse the orders of the Congress Ministries. The Governor-General supported the Governors. The Congress Ministeries resigned on February 16, 1938.

Very soon negotiations were opened and an agreement was arrived at between the Governors and the Premiers and the principle enunciated by the Congress of individual examination by the Ministers was accepted. The Congress Ministers did, after the ending of the crisis exactly what they would have done had the crisis never occurred. It was a great victory for the Congress.

ORISSA CRISIS

Another crisis arose in Orissa over the appointment of an official of the Orissa Service to act as Governor in the absence on leave of the incumbent. The Ministers notified to the Governor that they would resign if that were done. The Governor cancelled his leave and thereby put an end to the crisis.

C. P. CRISIS

A crisis arose in the Central Provices in connection with the exercise of clemency by Mr. Shareef, the Minister of Justice in respect of a prisoner who was convicted for the offence of committing rape. Mr. Shareef admitted the error of judgment into which he allowed himself to fall, expressed regret and offered to resign. The matter was referred to Sir M. Mukerji, and as a sequel of his findings Mr. Shareef resigned from Ministership.

There was a still more serious crisis in C. P. Dissensions in the C. P. Ministry manifested themselves early in May. A settlement was arrived at but it proved a patch-work. Dr. Khare and his colleagues Shiris Gole and Deshmukh resigned and the remaining three Ministers were dismissed by the Governor and on the 20th May a new Ministry was formed by Dr. Khare. The members of the Working Committee and Mahatma Gandhi all endeavoured to persuade Dr. Khare to see the fatal error of judgment into which he deliberately or otherwise betrayed himself and

also that he had made himself willingly or unwillingly an instrument of the Governor's sinister game.

The Working Committee declared Dr. Khare guilty of series of grave errors of judgement which exposed the Congress to ridicule and brought down its prestige. It further declared that Dr. Khare had proved himself unworthy of holding any position of responsibility in the Congress organisation. Consequently Dr. Khare resigned from the leadership of the Congress Party and Shriyut Shukla was elected as party leader in his place. He was called by the Governor to form the Cabinet.

Dr. Khare did not let the matters rest at that. He continued his activities against the Congress High Command and the Working Committee disqualified him for being a Congress member for 2 years. He was called upon to resign from the C. P. Assembly which he refused.

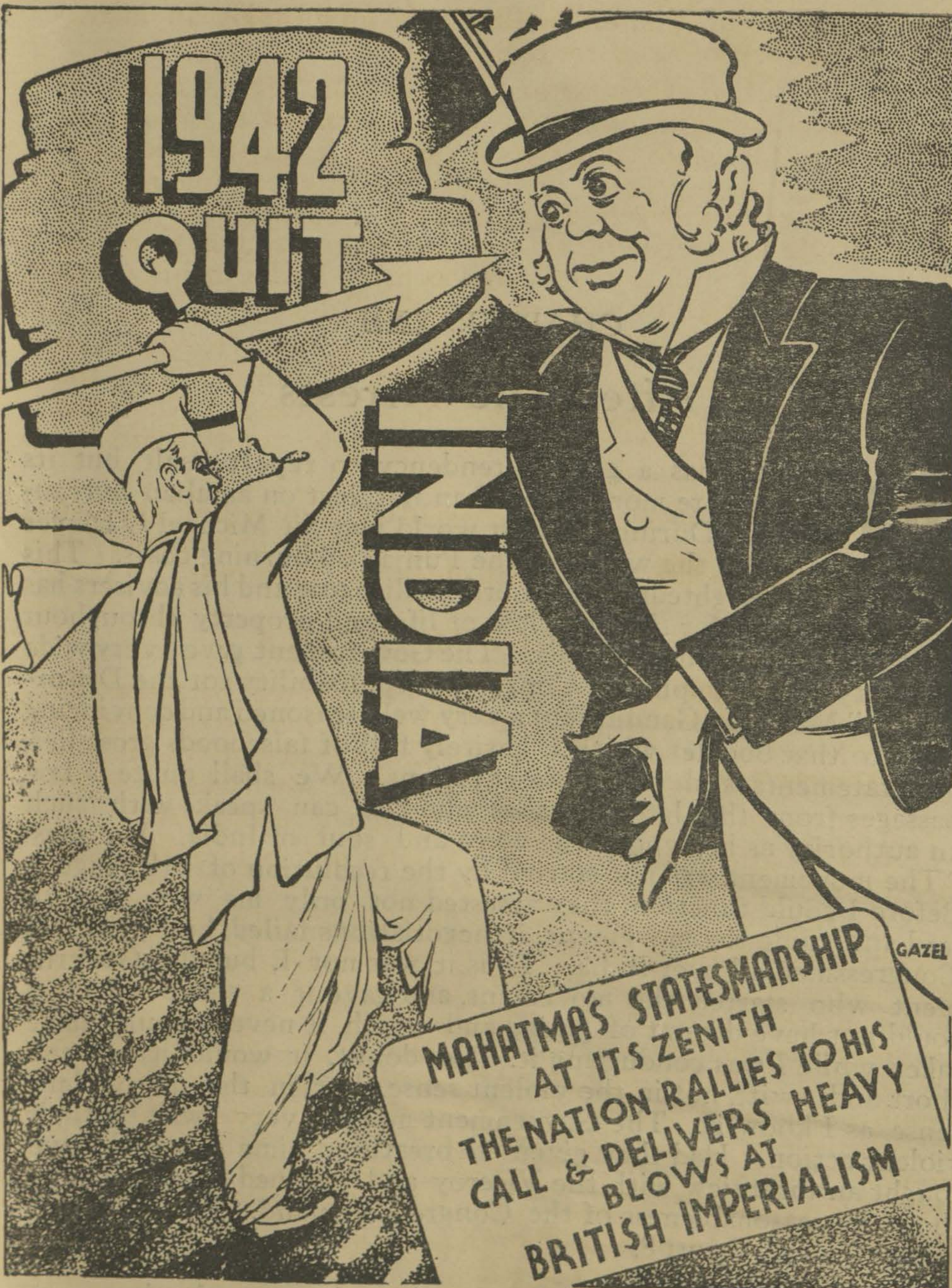
Later he was taken as an Executive Councillor and we believe that his disobedience of the Congress orders was his strongest recommendation for being given this high post.

RESIGNATION OF MINISTRIES

As no suitable compromise could be effected between the Congress and the Government, the Working Committee asked all Congress Ministries to resign and by 8th November 1939, all the provinces, where Congress party was in power, were taken over by the Governors under Section 93 of Government of India Act.

In 1946 after the restoratin of *satus quo* before the war, general elections were held.

In all the provinces it captured almost all the general seats, including those reserved for Harijans. Moslem League captured all Moslem central seats and secured a big bulk of Mohammedan seats in almost all the provinces. In eight provinces Congress Ministeries were constituted and in two provinces Moslem League Ministeries were set up. In the Punjab a Coalition was formed between the Unionists and the Congress and a Coalition Ministry has been established there. The Sind Ministry has been a shaky affair all through, and now again fresh elections are being held there. The only stable League Ministry is in the Bengal but it has given a very poor account of itself. The whole of the province is in the hands of rioters. There is great amount of loss of life and destruction of property. Specially in East Bengal, there has never been a more serious calamity in India than the one being experienced in these days in that province.

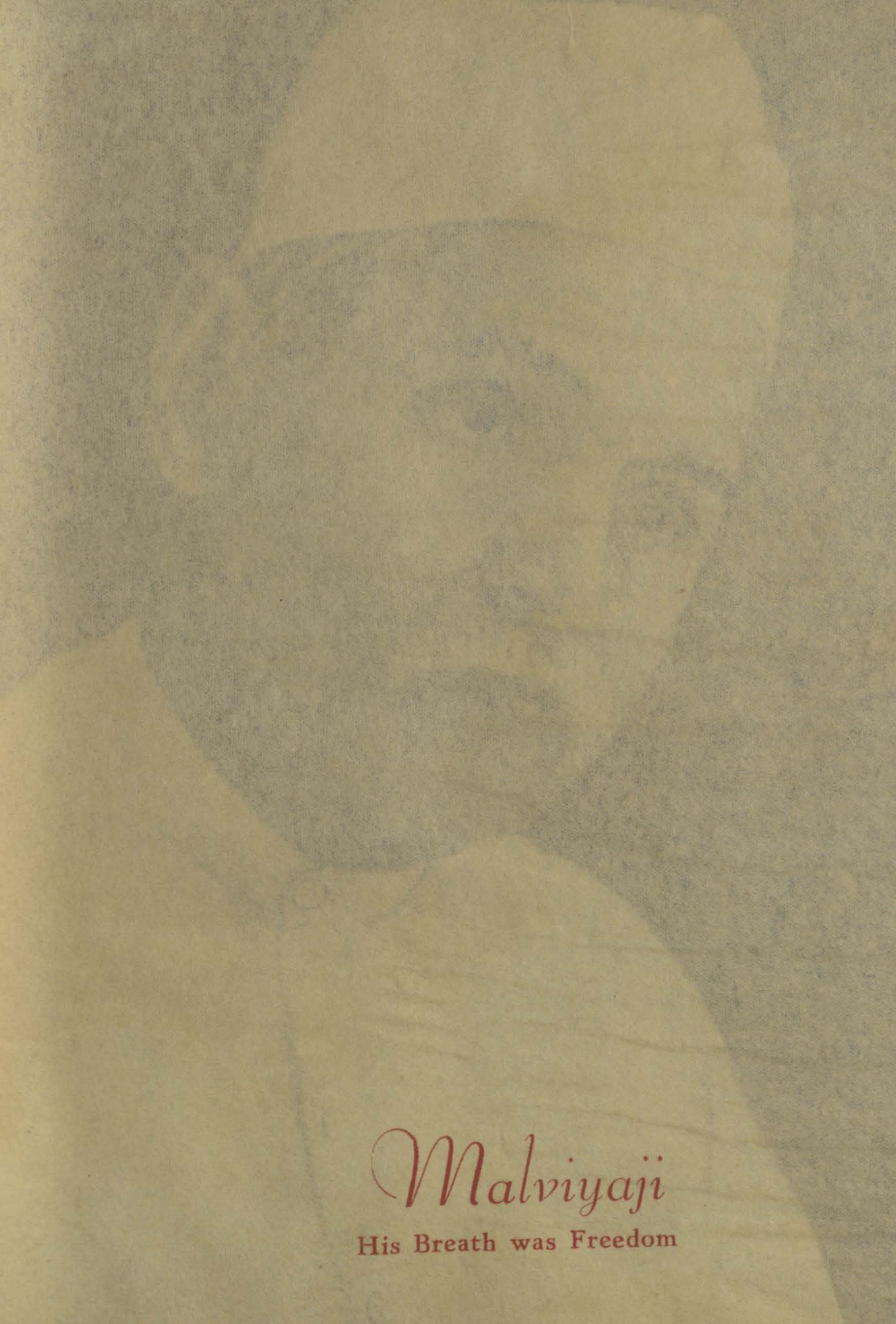

1942
QUIT
INDIA
MAHATMA'S STATESMANSHIP
AT ITS ZENITH
THE NATION RALLIES TO HIS
CALL & DELIVERS HEAVY
BLOWS AT
BRITISH IMPERIALISM
GAZEL

CHAPTER XXII

After The Arrests

HISTORY has a general tendency to repeat itself, but its lessons are more often than not, lost on an alien bureaucracy. During the first world war Sir Michael O'Dwyer dragged the whole of the Punjab on burning coals. This time the short-sightedness of Lord Linlithgow and his advisers has been responsible for the huge loss of life and property throughout the length and breadth of India. The Government gave a very wide publicity to a pamphlet "Congress responsibility for the Disturbances." Mahatma Gandhi sent a very well-reasoned and convincing reply to that booklet which is entirely full of falsehoods gross lies, mis-statements and mis-representations. We shall quote a few passages from that letter because who else can speak with such an authority as he, who is the voice and soul of India. He says: "The movement was not started by the resolution of 8th August. Before I could function, they arrested not only me who was to lead and guide the movement, if negotiations failed, but principal Congressmen all over India. Thus it was not I, but the Government who started the movement, and gave it a shape which I could not have dreamt of giving and which it never would have taken while I was conducting it. No doubt, it would have been short and swift, not in the violent sense, but in the non-violent sense, as I know it. The Government made it very swift by their violent action. Had they given me breathing time I would have sought an interview with the Viceroy and strained every nerve to show the reasonableness of the Congress demand. I had said in my speech on August 8.

"Let me tell you at the outset that the struggle does not commence to-day. I have yet to go through much ceremonial as I always do, and this time more than ever before, the burden is so



Malviyaji

His Breath was Freedom

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"Let me tell you at the outset that the struggle does not commence to-day. I have yet to go through much ceremonial as I always do, and this time [illegible] before, the burden is so



heavy. I have yet to continue to reason with those with whom I seem to have lost all credit for the time being."

In my Hindustani speech I had said :

"Here is a *mantram* short one that I will give you. You may imprint it on your hearts and with every breath of yours give expression to it. The *mantram* is this : 'We shall do or die.' We shall either free India or die in the attempt. We shall not live to see the perpetuation of slavery.

"He who loses this life, shall gain it, he who will seek to save it shall lose it. Freedom is not for the faint-hearted. Take a pledge with God and your own consciences as witness that you will not rest till freedom is achieved."

Further on he writes :

"The Congress leaders were desirous that the movement should remain non-violent only, because they knew, that no violent movement in the existing circumstances could possibly succeed, when matched against a most powerfully equipped Government. Whatever violence was committed by people whether Congressmen, or others, was therefore, committed in spite of the leaders' wishes. If it is held otherwise it should be proved beyond doubt before an impartial tribunal. The Government action in enforcing India-wide arrests was so violent that the population which was in sympathy with the Congress lost control. The Government action was in excess of the endurance of human nature. It and its authors are responsible for the explosion that followed.

"What can be the cause of this extraordinary resentment against the Congress into which the Government have betrayed themselves. I have never known them before to exhibit so much irritation. If the Government were sincere they would have welcomed the offer of help made by the Congress. But the Government did not wish to treat India as an equal partner.

"Freedom has so far been elusive. Now the Hindu-Muslim unity, now the pledges to the Princes, now the interests of the scheduled classes, now the vested interests of the Europeans, barred the gateway to freedom. Divide and rule was an inexhaustible well.

"It is wrong to accuse the Congress of hindering war efforts Congress activity up to the night of 8th August was confined to resolutions only. The dawn of 9th saw the Congress imprisoned What followed was a direct result of the Government action."

There cannot be a more authoritative pronouncement than this because it comes from an Apostle of Truth and Non-Violence and who is crystal clear in his words, thoughts and actions.

On August 9th there was some disturbance in Bombay and a few other places. On August 11th and 12th acts of violence were committed at various places in India, mainly in Bombay, Madras, the Central Provinces, and Bengal, but areas most seriously affected were the east of the United Provinces and above all Bihar There was no disturbance in N.-W. F. P., in the Punjab and Sind. The activities of these people were directed principally against all kinds of communications and particularly against railways, telegraphs and telephones, police stations, post offices and other Government buildings were attacked. People, in general, were very much full of anger and hatred against the bureaucracy for the regime of repression, frightfulness, terrorisation and lawlessness. Ordinance Raj had considerably irritated the people. Economic conditions were no less appalling. Food shortage, high prices, the thoughtless and heartless actions of a callous bureaucracy while carrying out measures of evacuation involving thousands of poor and ignorant men, misbehaviour of soldiers, and at the top of all these arrests of the popular and highly-respected and immensely loved leaders made the people lose their balance and led them to violence at some places. There was no class or section, no social or functional unit, which was not disaffected against the Government. Social and economic discontentment, huge frustration due to poverty, hunger and daily increasing food scarcity had poisoned the minds of people and goaded them to resort to acts which would paralyse the Government. Undirected, uncontrolled and leaderless, the masses were surging, heaving, and swinging in their struggle for freeadom. Every individual and every group acted on its own impelled by diverse motives and diverse ideals. The feeling to be free and to feel free was the guiding motive of this struggle.

At some places they actually established a peaceful parallel Government administering law and order in the most commendable manner.

There was a four-day debate in the Central Assembly from September 15 to 18, 1942, regarding the situation that had arisen in the country since the passing of the All-India Congress Committee's resolution of Agust 8th, 1942.

Sir Reginald Maxwell made a long speech which was characterised by S. Sant Singh as a narrative of half-truths, false-

hoods, and in most cases, lies. Sir Maxwell while defending the ruthless repressive policy of the Government of India, said :

" One thing is quite plain that with one enemy at one's gates and another enemy within them, the prime duty of this Government is to undo the harm that has been done as soon as possible and to put this country in a state of defence against both."

S. Sant Singh read a portion of a report which had been made by an independent body unconnected with the Congress, appointed by the big merchants of Karachi.

" Some of the youthful victims, mostly students and sons of respectable citizens have stated before the committee that at the police station after severe beatings by slaps, fistcuffs, kicks they were taken to a room and made to lie down on their backs with a plain-clothed man sitting on their chest, their feet were lifted up by another man and they were beaten on the soles of their bare feet with canes most of them having received 10 to 30 stripes. A boy was taken hold of by a policeman for the purpose of committing sodomy. His pyjamas were forcibly removed but on the latter's raising hue and cry, he was let off."

Mr. K. C. Neogi said : "The Home Member has delivered a speech worthy of the Chief Constable of India. He is a believer in the doctrine, that India was conquered by the sword and by the sword it must be held. Conciliation is not in his line."

Mr. K. C. Neogi narrated an incident that Sir Madhav Rao Deshpande of Nagpur was made to remove the litter from the street.

There was a similar debate in the Council of State. Rai Bahadur Sri Narain Mehta said :

"Troops and police were let loose on the countryside. I had reports made to me of the oppression of police, and of the troops. of vandalism, of wanton destruction, and loot of private property, of whole villages burnt, of extortion of money on threats of arrest, and in some cases, of actual physical torture. Indians in Bihar have by now been taught that there is a very little difference between shooting down a pariah dog and a pariah nigger."

On September 24, 1942, in the Central Legislative Assembly Mr. K. C. Neogi moved a resolution recommending to the Governor General in Council the appointment of a Committee to inquire into the allegations of police and military excesses in the country. The resolution was rejected.

He charged the Government as under :

1. General pillage and arson and wanton damage to property by the police. This has particularly happened in many villages in Bihar and U. P. There was no discrimination between places where disturbances had taken place and those which were quite quiet.

2. Shooting at places where no disturbance had taken place. This has particularly happened in Calcutta.

3. Random shooting of innocent people. This had happened in Delhi, Calcutta and elsewhere.

4. Assault or shooting of non-violent crowds or individuals without proper warning.

5. Excessive amount of force used in dispersing non-violent crowds.

6. Merciless assaults particularly whipping, insults, and indignities on all and sundry. In some cases, whipping and other kinds of assaults are reported to have led to death.

CHIMUR

Prof. Bhansali's fast

Chimur is a village in Chanda District, C.P. It is deeply regretted that the crowd in a fit of anger killed 4 Government officials at that place. When Prof. J. P. Bhansali heard of the excesses including rape committed by the Police officials at Chimur, he saw Mr. Aney, a member of Viceroy's Executive Council. And as he did not get any relief from him, he decided to undertake a fast at Mr. Aney's house. In the evening the Professor was arrested and lodged in Delhi District Jail where he continued his fast and was forcibly fed. On November 6 he was taken to Sevagram and released. The Professor ended his fast and on 10th started for Chimur and on 11th he resumed his fast there in a temple. He was forcibly taken back to Sevagram. In that condition he walked again to Chimur a distance of 62 miles in 56 hours. He had no food or water for 14 days. He was arrested and taken back to Sevagram once again. He started his journey to Chimur but as he was very weak he could not reach his destination. He was arrested and brought back to Sevagram.

Quick executive action was taken to enforce a rigorous ban on the publication of all news about Prof. Bhansali's fast and Chimur affairs.

Dr. Moonje had visited Chimur on September 25, and he issued a report which stated categorically that cases of rape had occurred along with other forms of frightfulness such as the looting and demolition of property on a large scale.

Mrs. Ramabai Tambe (wife of ex-Governor of the province) and several other ladies made a thorough investigation. Their report made very damaging statements which substantially corroborated the conclusions of Dr. Moonje. Mrs. Wazalwar could establish 11 cases of rape.

The C. P. Government issued a communique and refused to appoint an Inquiry Committee. A settlement between Prof. Bhansali and the C. P. Government was brought about on January 12, 1943, on the sixty-third day of his fast.

Prof. Bhansali by staking his life, vindicated the honour of Indian women. His name will go down to posterity as the man who single-handed vindicated the principle, which he spoke of several times during the last sixty days that molestation of even a single woman is a crime not only against the society but God. India is the land of satis. Millions of women throughout ages have lived and died for their honour in this holy land. Prof. Bhansali in his generation fought for it with his life and blood.

MACHINE-GUNNING FROM THE AIR

Crowds were machine-gunned from the air at five places.

During a debate of India in the House of Commons when this statement was made that in an effort to keep order, Hindu mobs were being machine-gunned from aeroplanes, conservative members cheered. The Speaker was asked to restrain the members but he declined to intervene.

No complete figures of arrests and prosecutions are available but the following is the official estimate for the period up to the end of 1942:

Persons arrested ...	60,229
Persons detained under Defence Rules ...	18,000
Persons killed by Police or Military firing ...	940
Persons injured ...	1,630

According to non-official statement 7,000 is the number of the dead.

Military had to be called out in about 60 places. Police had to resort to firing on about 538 occasions and 'planes were used to machine-gun the innocent crowds at 5 places. This is the official version but these figures are a gross under-estimate. The Government had carried on a campaign of whole-sale arrests with a view to suppress the organization. The Government made press censorship so rigorous that the public had very little information through papers about the way in which the policy of total repression was being carried out. It is quite clear that the Government was acting with a plan and a purpose. The Government's efforts had only one end in view in the preparation and adoption of a ruthless repressive machinery for fighting the Congress and finishing it for once and for all.

PRESS CENSORSHIP

Rigid censorship was imposed on the press. There was a still further encroachment on the nominal liberty the press enjoys in India. In 1943 a first-class crisis occurred in the relations between the Government and the press. As a protest against the orders of certain Provincial Governments banning the publication of any news relating to Prof. Bhansali or his fast, the Standing Committee of the Newspaper Editors' Conference decided that all newspapers in India should be asked to suspend publication for one day and until the Government's restriction was withdrawn, refuse to publish circulars from Government Houses, New Year Honours list, and speeches of members of the British Government, the Government of India and Provincial Governments, etc., The response to this appeal was magnificent and effectively demonstrated the solidarity of the press.

The C. P. Government withdrew this ban when matters were settled with Prof. Bhansali and the Indian Press dropped the above-mentioned retaliatory measures.

Another event of first-class importance is that Mr. William Phillips arrived in New Delhi as the personal representative of President Roosevelt. This aroused country-wide interest. " My duty " he said, "will be to know India as well as I can and report to the President."

He requested the authorities to permit him to see Mahatmaji but the permission was refused. This refusal stamped Britain's Indian policy with a finality. It was a broad hint to the country that Government did not want any settlement with the Congress and also to America that Britian would not permit any power to meddle in Indian affairs.

A PREMIER DISMISSED

Mr. Allah Bakhsh, Premier of Sind renounced the honours he held from the British Government. While doing so he wrote a letter to the Viceroy saying, "that the policy of the British Government has been to continue their imperialistic hold on India, and persist in keeping her under subjection, use the political and communal differences for propaganda purposes, and crush the national forces to serve their own imperialistic aims and intentions. I feel I cannot retain the honours I hold from the British Government which in the circumstances that have arisen I cannot but regard as tokens of British Imperialism."

He was asked to resign because be showed this courage of his convictions but he boldly refused. He was dismissed on the plea that he ceased to enjoy the confidence of the Government.

His renouncing the titles was due to the cumulative result of the feeling that the British Government did not want to part with power, and Mr. Churchill's speech had shattered all hopes.

He said: "I have no doubt the Congress has no sympathy whatever either with Germany or Japan. The National demand can be suppressed. It means more sacrifices. The more the repression, the greater the bitterness, and the harm caused would be more to British interests than ours." He organized and presided at the Azad Muslim Conference held at Delhi to counteract the effects of Muslim-League. Unfortunately he was murdered soon after.

Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukerjee, Minister for Finance, Bengal Government resigned his office on November 16, 1942, as a protest against the Central Government's policy with regard to the political situation in the country.

The Government ruthlessly adopted all the possible repressive measures to suppress and crush this movement and it is not at all surprising that the unorganized and leaderless movement of the people could not stand the organized and country-wide violence so extravagantly brought into play by the Government. How can unarmed, unorganized, untrained and indisciplined people stand against a foreign bureaucracy which is heartless, and has not an iota of sympathy, and has not a shred of scruple in adopting the most barbarous methods to quell the disturbances. When the Home Member declared Congress and its adherents as an internal enemy how can one expect exercise of any restraint on the part of officials in indulging in extreme excesses of savagery and brutality. What an irony of fate! Gandhi and Abul Kalam Azad

be declared as enemies of India while usurpers and foreigners claimed to be the masters of the house and friends of India.

Thus came to an end, this national revolt which terminated without achieving its objective. But those heroes and martyrs who sacrificed their all in accelerating the pace of nation's march towards freedom deserve the highest gratitude of one and all. It is an important duty of the Congress that a detailed history of this movement be compiled. The crushing of legitimate activities and the bombing and machine-gunning drove the movement underground. Shriyut Jai Prakash Narain and Mrs. Aruna Asaf Ali made a very substantial contribution towards making the movement a success.

BENGAL FAMINE

A calamity of unparalleled intensity and unequalled fierceness was the Bengal Famine of 1943 which plunged that province in particular, and the whole of India in general, in deep grief, and which cast a heavy gloom over the whole of India. Thirty or forty lakhs of people died due to hunger and various consequent epidemics. Death figures were one lac per week, though the Secretary of State put them at 1,000 per week. It was a man-made famine and it is a matter of deep regret that Indians are as much to blame in this matter as the British. The Government of Bengal and the Government of India deserve the severest condemnation and censure for neglect of their primary duty in this connection. The Secretary of State for India treated such a catastrophe with unpardonable indifference and inexcusable unconcern. Most certainly such a great waste of life and property could have been prevented or checked. What a misfortune! The rice was in the shops and hundreds of thousands looked at it with blank eyes and gaping mouths. They could not buy it as they had no money and they did not snatch it because they had been emasculated by centuries of subjugation. They accepted death, intense suffering and excruciating pain and did not forcefully take possession of the rice, indicates the degradation to which we have been reduced. Men and women died like flies. Corpses were lying on the roads. It is difficult to imagine a graver situation and a more miserable state of affairs.

GANDHIJI RELEASED

Gandhiji fell seriously ill while in dentention. He had hookworm infection in addition to an attack of malaria. He was released unconditionally on May 6th. The Government particularly emphasised the point that the release was heing made on purely medical grounds.

About a month after his release Gandhiji gave an interview to Mr. Stuart Gelder, correspondent of *News Chronicle* in which he said that there was no question of starting Civil Disobedience, that 1944 was not 1942 and though he did not have the authority to withdraw the August Resolution, its operative part sanctioning non-violent struggle ought to be deemed as lapsed. He wrote a letter to the Viceroy for permission to meet the Working Committee members in jail or to see the Viceroy to discuss matters. He made a concrete proposal that he was prepared to advise the Working Committee to offer full co-operation in the war-effort if declaration of immediate independence was made and a national Government responsible to the Central Assembly, was formed, subject to the proviso that during the pendency of war military operations should continue as at present but without involving any financial burden on India. The Viceroy refused to see Mahatma Gandhi and rejected his proposals as quite unacceptable even as a basis for discussion.

Gandhiji with a view to end the deadlock decided to meet Mr. Jinnah to settle the question of Muslim League joining hands with the Congress for making a united National Demand. Gandhiji and all Indians believe national unity to be their shield and their sword and to be the most potent and powerful and the only weapon which the people of India have to forge and wield in order to wrest power from the hands of British Imperialists. Congress-League agreement was an essential requisite for setting up a Provisional National Government for the successful defence of the country and for freedom.

Mr. Jinnah too had said in April 1943 :

" The wretched British Government takes advantage of our follies. Can't we unite, unite and get the British out."

It was the imperative need of the hour that Congress and League should speak with one voice that the British should quit India and hand over the Government to Indian nation.

Action in conformity with this sentiment was required. But the utter misfortune of the country did not allow this dream to be translated into action. For nearly three weeks Gandhi-Jinnah negotiations went on, but unhappy India was shocked to learn that the leaders had agreed to differ.

There is no doubt that the British Government hinders, on purpose, unity between Congress and the League. Cripps in 1942 had flaunted the lack of agreement between the two as the only hurdle in the way to Indian freedom.

The British bureaucracy has an unparalleled record of throwing the whole blame on Indians for all its faults and failings.


THE SAGA OF INA
RANEE of JHANSI
LIVES AGAIN!
INA
GAZEL

CHAPTER XXIII

The Simla Conference

THE importance of this conference lies not in any achievements but that it constitutes a definite milestone in the history of this country and the Indian National Congress.

That the very head of the Government of India who unceremoniously rejected the most modest request of Gandhiji to see him and discuss with him the way to resolve the deadlock, went to England to consult the Cabinet to take effective steps to conciliate the Congress, and that very Viceroy who would not permit Mahatma Gandhi to consult the members of the Working Committee had to release them all unconditionally. The 'Quit India' resolution was there, the national demand was as alive as ever, but the Government could not possibly keep the leaders of the Congress behind the bars any longer. During the discussions between Amery and Wavell the equal representation between the Congress and the League was changed into equal representation for Hindus and Muslims.

Lord Wavell broadcast the following proposals:

1. To invite Indian leaders both of Central and Provincial politics to take counsel with him with a view to the formation of a new Executive Council, more representative of organized political opinion.

2. It would be an entirely Indian Council, except for the Viceroy and the Commander-in-Chief.

3. Portfolio of External affairs so far held by the Viceroy to be in charge of an Indian member of the Council, so far as the interests of British India are concerned.

4. Appointment of Britain's High Commissioner in India.

The formation of the Government will in no way prejudice the final constitutional settlement. The main tasks before this Government would be :—

1. To prosecute war against Japan.
2. To carry on the Government of British India.
3. To take steps for a long term solution.

He invited to this conference :

1. Those who held office of a Premier in a Provincial Government at that time or who last held this office.

2. Leader of Congress party and Deputy Leader of Muslim League in the Central Assembly, Leaders of Nationalist party and European group, in the Assembly, leaders of Congress party and Muslim League in the Council of State.

3. Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Jinnah as the recognised leaders of the principal political parties.

4. Rao Bahadur N. Shivraj to represent the scheduled classes.

5. Master Tara Singh to represent the Sikhs.

On the 15th of June the members of the All-India Congress Working Committee who were under detention were released.

Mr. C. R. Attlee advised Indians to seize the opportunity. Labour leaders like Mr. Harold Laski and Sir Stafford Cripps repeated the same thing.

The Congress Working Committee met at Birla House, Delhi, on 21st June for the first time since 1942. It was decided that the President and other Congressmen invited to the conference be authorised to attend. The Working Committee considered this offer favourably because it was a proposal for brief interim arrangements which would lead rapidly to Indian Democratic Freedom.

The Conference met on the 25th June. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad made a brilliant speech in Hindustani. He focussed on the goal of Independence as enunciated by August Resolution of 1942. As to parity question, Maulana Azad is reported to have said that the Congress did not bother as to how many seats were given to any community, but he was interested in seeing by which door these representatives came.

Mr. Jinnah said that there was no adequate provision against the Congress forcing its decisions by a majority vote against the Muslim bloc. There were statements and rejoinders, consultations and criticisms, parleys and fault-findings. On 14th July

the Conference was dismissed as a failure, as no agreement could be arrived at.

Lord Wavell said :

" The main idea underlying the Conference was mine. If it had succeeded, its success would have been attributed to me. I cannot place the blame for its failure upon any of the parties."

Mr. Jinnah said:

" On a final examination and analysis of the Wavell plan we found that it was a snare. If we had accepted the position as presented to us by Lord Wavell we would have betrayed our people. It would have been an abject surrender on our part of all we stand for, and it would have been a death-knell to the Muslim League."

The Congress President said:

" If the British Government had wished to give shape to things they would have realised the communal condition and they ought to have been prepared not to surrender the right of veto to any group and thus block the path of progress."

It was the Government which had laid the basis for Congress-League disagreement and the failure of the Conference, but it played its cards so cleverly that Congress and the League blamed each other. The British immediately advertised to the world that Britain was willing to transfer power but India's mutual disagreement was the stumbling block.

Labour Government came to power with a substantial majority. Japan had been finally defeated. Elections to the legislatures were to be held and the labour Cabinet postponed its decision till after the results of elections showed the strength of the various political parties. Almost all the general seats of the Central and Provincial Assemblies were captured by the Congress. Harijan seats were also mainly won by the Congress. Regarding Muslim seats the N.-W. F. P. gave a very good account of itself and Muslim League was defeated. In other Muslim majority provinces Muslim leaguers had swept the polls but in the Punjab they did not secure absolute majority and hence could not form a Ministry in that province.

PARLIAMENTARY DELEGATION

In January, 1946 a team of 10 members of Parliament—two peers, five labour, one liberal and two Conservative M. P.'S. toured India. It was an odd assortment, most of them without political

experience or understanding. They were intent more on the pleasures of going to places and seeing things than on finding out ways and means of a real Indo-British settlement.

CABINET MISSION

When this delegation returned to England Mr. C. R. Attlee announced that a Cabinet Mission composed of Lord Pethick Lawrence, Sir Stafford Cripps and Mr. Alexander would be going to India with the intention of using their utmost endeavours to help her to attain her freedom as speedily and fully as possible.

Before the mission started on its journey Reuter's political correspondent had an interview with its leader, and in reply to a question it was stated:

"Before the mission goes out the Cabinet will come to certain broad decisions. Within the principal decisions the Mission will be free to act. If in the course of negotiations, points arise which have not yet been thrashed out in the Cabinet, the Mission doubtless will refer to the Cabinet."

This delegation arrived at Karachi on March 23rd, 1946 and in Delhi on March 24th, 1946. Till April 13th they met representatives of different political parties and interests. On April 11th they issued a statement in which they said: "The Mission are now proposing to enter on the next and most important phase of the negotiations. It is a phase which calls for the utmost efforts from the leading statesmen of India and from the Cabinet mission to arrive at a solution acceptable to all sides."

On April 28th the Congress and Muslim League decided to accept the invitation of the delegation to participate in a conference and appointed four members each for this purpose.

This conference opened on May 5th. On May 8th Mr. Jinnah in a letter to the Secretary of State said that no useful purpose would be served by discussing the points suggested by the Cabinet mission. In a letter dated May 9th the Congress President stated that the cabinet mission's suggestions were not acceptable and in their place suggested the formation of an Interim Provisional Government and reference to an independent tribunal of matters in dispute concerning the Constituent Assembly. Mr. Jinnah sent a memorandum to the Cabinet Mission embodying minimum demands of the Muslim League.

The Congress also sent a memorandum embodying certain

points as a basis for agreement. The Mission published the following fundamental principles :

The future constitutional structure of British India to be as follows:

1. The Union Government dealing with the following subjects: Foreign affairs, Defence and Communications.

2. There will be two groups of provinces, one of the predominantly Hindu provinces, and the other of the predominantly Muslim provinces, dealing with all other subjects except those which the provinces in their respective groups desire to be dealt with in common.

3. Indian States will take their appropriate place in this structure on terms to be negotiated with them.

The President of the Congress informed Lord Pethick-Lawernce that they were always willing to discuss fully any matters concerning the future of India with representatives of the Muslim League or any other organization. Various suggestions were made regarding fundamental principles. A letter was sent by the Mission to the Congress and the Muslim League enclosing the following proposals to be discussed by the Congress and the Muslim League delegates:

1. There shall be an All-India Union Government, and Legislature dealing with foreign affairs, defence, communication, fundamental rights and having the necessary powers to obtain for itself, the finances required for these subjects.

2. All the remaining powers shall vest in the provinces.

3. Groups of provinces may be formed and such groups may determine the provincial subjects which they desire to take in common.

4. The groups may set up there own executives and legislatures.

5. The legislatures and the Government of the Union shall be composed of equal proportions from the Muslim Majority and Hindu Majority provinces.

6. The constitution-making machinery to arrive at the constitution on the above basis shall be as follows :

(*a*) Representatives from each Provincial Assembly on the basis of 1/10 of their members in proportion to the strength of the various parties in that Assembly.

(*b*) Representatives shall be invited from the states on the basis of their population in proportion to the representation from British India.

(*c*) It shall meet at the earliest possible date in Delhi.

(*d*) It shall divide into three sections.

1. Hindu Majority provinces. 2. Muslim Majority provinces, and 3. The States.

(*e*) The first two sections will then meet separately to decide the provincial constitution for their groups, and if they wish a group constitution.

Mr. Jinnah wrote to Lord Pethick-Lawrence:

"We think no useful purpose will be served to discuss this paper, as it is a complete departure from your original formula."

The Congress President suggested some obvious defects in the proposals above cited, and stated that the Congress could accept them only if those defects were remedied.

The Cabinet Mission placed its proposals in detail before the Congress and the Muslim League and made the following appeal:

"We lay these proposals before you in the profound hope that they will be accepted and operated by you in the same spirit of accommodation and goodwill in which they are offered. We appeal to all who have the future good of India at heart to extend their vision beyond their own community or interest to the interest of the whole four hundred millions of the Indian people."

Regarding Interim Government the delegation proposed as follows:

"We attach the greatest importance to the setting up at once of an Interim Government having the support of the major political parties. It is essential during the interim period that there should be the maximum of co-operation in carrying through the difficult tasks that face the Government of India."

The Congress accepted the long term proposal but did not agree to join the Interim Government. The Muslim League first accepted and then rejected both long and short term proposals.

The Viceroy appointed officials as his executive councillors and there was a deadlock once again.

Lord Wavell, however, carried on his efforts and the Congress was persuaded to join the Interim Government. On

August 11th and 12th, a meeting of the Congress Working Committee was held. Maulana Abul Kalalm Azad had retired from the Presidentship of the Congress handing over charge to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. The Working Committee accepted the Viceroy's invitation to form the Interim Government. This decision was later confirmed by the A.-I.C.C. which met at Delhi on 22nd and 23rd September. Lord Wavell kept on negotiating with Mr. Jinnah and finally the Muslim League also joined on 12th October. This was due to the efforts of Nawab of Bhopal. It nominated 4 Muslim Leaguers and one *Harijan*. While the Congress nominated its topmost leaders, the League intentionally nominated men of second rank and perhaps of third evèn.

The nomination of a *Harijan* member out of its quota is done out of mere spite. It is to injure the prestige of the Congress. The Muslim League nominees have not accepted the leadership of Pt. Jawaharlal. It is, therefore, not a coalition Cabinet. The two nations theory has been translated into practice. Will such a Cabinet be able to work as a team for the good of the country seems very problematic and even an extreme optimist has his serious misgivings on this point. Already signs of disagreement are visible.

THE COMMUNAL RIOTS

The Interim Government has not started under very auspicious circumstances. The Communal riots have disgraced the whole nation. Calcutta, Bombay, East Bengal and Bihar are passing through very distressing times. There has been a ruthless destruction of life and property. The fire has extended to Delhi, Meerut and other places.

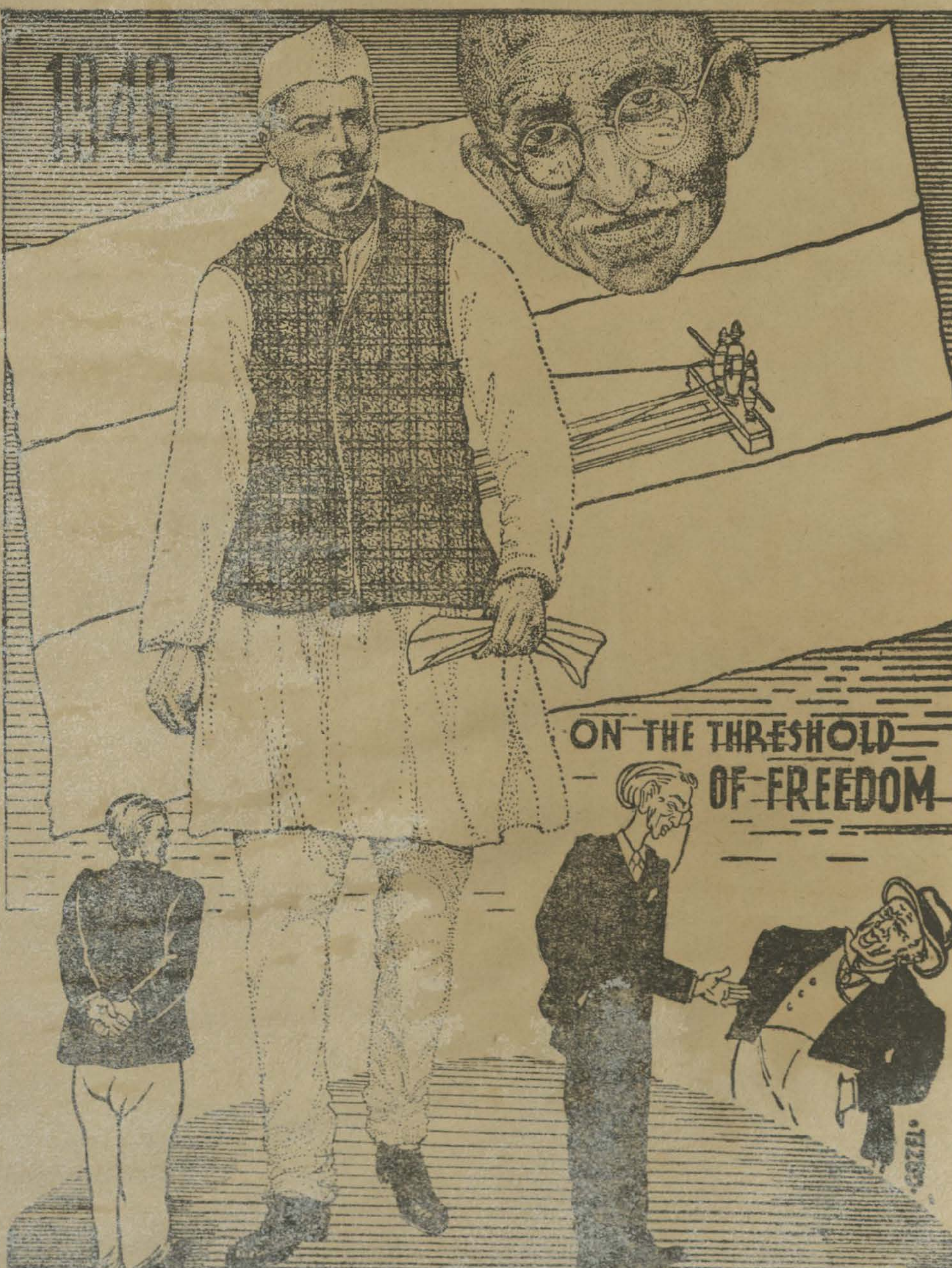
Thousands have been killed, many more thousands have been wounded and the loss of property is inestimable. It is easily beyond millions. But a much heavier loss is the tarnishing of our fame and spoiling of our good name in the eyes of the world. Slaves as we are, our prestige was already at a low level but these inter necine quarrels and diabolical acts have still further lowered us in the scale of humanity. Rape, arson, incendiarism, stabbings, assaults, loots and outrages have disgraced us all. It is not our intention to apportion blame. It is difficult to say how far the third party is involved in it. It has its own subtle ways to gain its end. The Bengal ministry has proved itself incompetent and inefficient to use the mildest language. It is being openly charged with being an instigator, provocator of, if not an actual partici-

pator in this grim tragedy. We had begun to believe that the catastrophic calamity that visited Bengal in 1943-44, *viz.*, the man-made famine which caused 4 millions of people to die like flies of hunger and disease must have taught a lesson unforgetable to the Bengalis to respect human life. Adversity is a very cementing factor but how very much disappointed is the whole of India to find that still that thirst for each other's blood is unslaked and the desire to exterminate the other is still rampant. Events in Bihar are still more disgraceful. Reprisals and retaliations have still further worsened the situation. Mahatma Gandhi has expressed his determination to fast unto death unless Bihar comes to its senses and at once stop this blood bath. Mahatma Gandhi and some members of the Interim Government have gone there to put out this fire of communal hatred. May God bless their efforts with success and may He change our hearts so that we may stop cutting each other's throat, and may He guide us on to the right path of national harmony, mutual goodwill and inter-communal concord.

It is extremely deplorable that Mr. Jinnah's attitude all through has not been commendable. He is a great man, a sagacious statesman, an able advocate, a proficient counsel, a wise diplomat, and a shrewd bargainer. It is difficult to beat him in all these qualities but he lacks that love and devotion, that attachment and affection for his motherland which is our immediate and urgent need. His two-nation theory his insistence for his pound of flesh, his proposed dissection of India, his truculent attitude, his intransigence, his uncompromising stand have materially harmed his country and his community. This blood-shed, this carnage, this furore, this excitement and rage are all indirect if not the direct effects of his fissiporous policy and his separatist tendency. He who would have been the strongest pillar of support for the Congress, and the country is today easily the most heavy boulder in the path of freedom. He and his Lieutenants have been preaching gospel of hatred and ill-will against Hindus and the Congress, and this is the result of all his preachings and teachings. The Congress stands bewildered, Britain is jubilant, and our motherland is stricken with grief at the sad turn the events have taken. Shall we turn a new leaf or shall we grovel in dust, and shall we be entrenched in communal mire are questions which will be answered not by him nor even by the stereotyped leaders of today but by the young generation, who will wash the sins of their elders by their own sparkling blood, who will destroy all these barriers

with their own efforts and weld all classes and communities into one nation, speaking with one voice and demanding Independence with full force and fighting for that end with devoted determination knowing no rest till in India is established Swaraj, Puran Swaraj for every Indian be he of any religion or denomination, any caste or creed, class or group. India will be governed by Indians for Indians. Let us hope for an early dawn of that era for the realisation of our dreams.

No dream is sweeter than, that of Liberty and no fulfilment is more welcome than of this dream.


1946
ON THE THRESHOLD
OF FREEDOM

NETAJI in the Jungles of Imphal



" In the name of God I take this sacred oath, that to liberate India, I will continue this sacred war of freedom till the last breath of my life. "

CHAPTER XXIV

Subhas and the I.N.A.

As it was ordained by Providence that Shrijut Subhas had to play a very important role as Netaji, he had to resign the presidentship of the Congress on April 29, 1939, under very painful circumstances. He said: "I feel my presence as President at this juncture may possibly be a sort of obstacle or handicap in the path of All-India Congress Committee, for instance it may feel inclined to appoint a Working Committee in which I shall be a misfit."

The Working Committee at Wardha on 11th August, 1939 declared Subhas to be disqualified as President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee and to be a member of any elective Congress Committee for 3 years.

On July 2nd, 1939, he was arrested. Subhas decided to go on hunger strike on 25th November, 1940. While notifying his intention to do so he wrote a memorable letter to the Governor of Bengal: "What higher consummation can life attain than peaceful self-immolation at the altar of one's cause. This is the technique of the soul. The individual must die so that nation may win freedom and glory." As his condition caused alarm he was released on 5th December, 1940. After coming out of jail he remained completely in his room and was believed to be doing some religious practices. On 16th January, 1941 some friends saw him whom he told:

"This is the last occasion you will meet me."

His disappearance was detected on 29th January, 1941. Subhas reached Peshawar on 19th January and he transformed himself into a Pathan. He was no longer a Bose. He had become Ziauddin. At Kabul he was the guest of Lala Uttam Chand. He was there for 43 days. He was in painful suspense all through.

Later he went to Berlin. L. Uttam Chand had to quit Afghanistan within 48 hours. He was taken into custody and sent in fetters in a lorry to Jalalabad on 27th May. He was put in that jail and he was taken from one jail to another till he was released.

On 18th March 1941, accompanied by the German officers and one Italian, Bose proceeded to the Russian frontier. He reached Moscow on 27th March. There was a plane waiting and he reached Berlin on 28th where he stayed for 2 years. Here with German help he raised an army composed of Indians who had been made prisoners of war during the fight between Germany and France. This army was known as Indian National Army (Azad Hind Fauj). It was meant to help Germany if that could help India to get freedom. Many of the Indian students who were in Germany also joined them. He got help from General Ribbentrop and a photo showing Subhas being greeted by Herr Hitler is a clear evidence of his being held in high esteem by the German leaders.

Indian soldiers who were taken as prisoners of war in Japan were given option either to join the army or remain behind prison bars as others. Under the circumstances Indian soldiers as they were inspired with burning patriotism and an urge for the liberation of the country formed themselves into an Indian National Army in 1942.

The Indian Independence Movement in East Asia was in certain respects a spontaneous effort while in some aspects it was inspired by the successes gained by the Japanese forces against the Anglo-Americans. The high-handedness of the British in Malaya had produced a spirit of hostility to the British in the Indian mind. In the case of Indian troops, particularly among the officers, there was disaffection owing to the exhibition of colour prejudice. Among men there was a feeling that they were not getting a fair deal in being sent to fight with practically no air protection, and without proper equipment. Singapore fell on February 15, 1942. Major Fujiwara invited Indians and said: "England's power is dwindling and that is the opportunity for India to strike for Independence. Japan is prepared to give all assistance to Indians to attain their independence." He suggested the formation of an Indian Independence League to organise all the Indians for fighting for India's independence, promising to provide all facilities to that end.

A meeting of Indian leaders from different parts of Malaya was held in Singapore on the 9th and 10th March, 1942. Meanwhile there was an invitation from Mr. Rash Behari Bose

for a conference in Tokyo. Indian leaders in Malaya sent a goodwill mission to Tokyo, where a conference was held from 28th to 30th March, 1942 with Rash Behari as chairman. There were representatives from Hongkong, Shanghai and Japan.

At the conference it was decided to start an Independence movement among Indians in East Asia and that "Independence complete, and free from foreign domination, interference or control of whatever nation shall be the object of this movement."

It was resolved that military action against India will be taken only by the Indian National Army and under the command of Indians together with such military, naval, and air co-operation, and assistance as may be requested from the Japanese authorities by the Council of action of the Indian Independence League to be formed.

The framing of the future constitution of India was to be left entirely to the representatives of the people of India. General Mohan Singh and Col. Gill attended this conference.

Another conference of Indians was held at Bankok from 15th to 22nd June, 1942.

The outstanding conclusions were:

1. To organise Indians in East Asia into an Indian Indedependence League to strive for India's Independence.

2. To raise Indian troops in East Asia as well as from Indian civilians.

3. To control and direct the programme and plan of action of the Independence Movement, to bring them into line with the aims and intentions of the Indian National Congress.

4. To demand from the Japanese Government a further clarification of their policy towards this movement as well as towards India.

A crisis was reached in December 1942 when the Council of Action refused to allow the Indian National Army to be transferred to Burma before all outstanding points had been clarified by the Japanese Government. On 8th December Col. Gill was arrested by the Japanese as a suspected British spy. By the 3rd week of December General Mohan Singh was also arrested. Both of them were kept in dark solitary cells.

Rash Behari was to go to Tokyo to get the clarification of the issues. The Japanese started building up a parallel organisation to weaken the League. A youth movement was launched by them and intensive propaganda was carried on against the leaders

of Independence League. Rash Behari Bose had prevailed upon the Japanese Government to ask Berlin to send Subhas in a safe journey to Tokyo. In April 1943 another conference of delegates from all territories in East Asia was called at Singapore in which Rash Behari announced that Subhas Bose would succeed him in the leadership of the movement. On July 2, 1943 Subhas arrived at Singapore and on July 4th took over the presidentship of the Indian Independence League from Sri Rash Behari who resigned. Subhas had a very enthusiastic reception, and all greeted him and saluted him as Netaji. With his assumption of leadership events moved rapidly and the organisations of the Indian Independence League and Indian National Army were overhauled and their formation was announced to the world on July 5th. Four training camps were opened in Malaya with a total capacity of training nearly 7,000 recruits at a time.

The Indian Independence League movement was supported by Indian money. Nearly 8 crores of rupees were collected in Burma. All the needs of the I.N.A. excepting arms and ammunition were met by purchases by the I. I. L. with its own funds.

RANI OF JHANSI REGIMENT

August 22, 1943 was a red-letter day in the history of the Independence movement, for on this day was performed the opening ceremony of the Rani of Jhansi training camp near Singapore.

Dr. Lakhshmi was commissioned and given its command. It had two sections (1) fighting unit, and (2) the nursing section.

After about two months this Regiment were quite trained and took part in route marches with full marching kit, ceremonial parades and public demonstration in training. It was a thrilling sight to see the Regiment demonstrating bayonet fighting or musket shooting and shouting "Delhi Chalo Delhi."

The 'Ranis' of the Nursing Section discharged with highest devotion their duties on the front under severe and almost continuous bombing and machine gunning from the air. This regiment was disbanded in May 1945 just when Rangoon fell.

Shrijut Subhas gave this stirring message to this army of liberation :

"To-day is the proudest day of my life. To-day it has pleased Providence to give me the unique honour of announcing to the whole world that Indian army of liberation has come into being. This is the Army that will emancipate India from the British yoke. Every Indian must feel proud that this Indian army has

been organised entirely under Indian leadership and that when the historic moment arrives under Indian leadership it will go into battle. Standing to-day in the grave-yard of British Empire even a child is convinced that the British empire is already a thing of the past. Comrades! My soldiers! Let your battle cry be "To Delhi, To Delhi." Comrades it is your privilege and honour to be the first to come forward and organise India's National Army. You are to-day the custodians of Indian National honour, and the embodiment of India's hopes and aspirations so conduct yourselves that your countrymen may bless you and may be proud of you. I assure you that I shall be with you in darkness and in sunshine, in sorrow and in joy, in suffering and in victory. For the present I can offer you nothing except hunger, thirst, suffering, forced marches, and death. It does not matter who among us will live to see India free. It is enough that Indians shall be free and that we shall give our all to make her free. May God now bless our Army and grant us victory. In the coming fight we shall ultimately win and our task will not end till our surviving heroes hold the victory parade on another grave-yard of the British Empire, the Lal Qilla of Ancient Delhi."

On October 21, 1943 the Provisional Government of Azad Hind was established. Netaji took the oath of allegiance to India and other members of this Government followed. This Government was recognised by nine states and as a mark of appreciation General Tojo also ceded the two islands, the Andamans and Nicobar. These were now named as Shaheed Deep and Swaraja Deep. This Government had an individuality. The Japanese Government treated it as an independent and free Government and wished to render it all possible assistance. This Government was recognised by Germany and Italy also. People of all classes most gladly and liberally contributed towards its funds. In many cases people gave millions of rupees and all their precious belongings. Children organised themselves into Bal Sena Dal. The Indian National Army was reorganised more vigorously. It declared war against England and America. It was determined on February 4, 1944, that the Azad Hind Fauj would begin its march against Imphal the capital of Manipore state. As soon as the army crossed the death valley from Kalwa to Kohima, nature seemed to be very hostile towards this army. Heavy rains set in for days and days at a stretch. Food was wanting, drinking water was not available and many had to live on old leaves and grass. Hundreds faced death. Hunger, exhaustion and difficulties did not bend this patriotic band of soldiers. They marched on

CHAPTER XXV

The End

WE are at our journey's end but the caravan of our country has yet to move still further. The goal is within sight and within reach but still not so near as one would have wished it to be. The dark night of slavery and subjugation is coming to an end. On our horizon appears the bright ray of hope announcing the advent of sun of liberation and liberty. The old order is changing and we are ushering a new era. The dreary and desolate desert of subordination we are leaving behind and the fresh and green oasis of freedom is fast approaching.

We are placing this book in the hands of our readers to goad them to quicken the pace, to accentuate their efforts, to increase their activities, to pool all their resources to win Swaraj for India with the least possible delay. The Congress is in the saddle but the reins are not in its hands. It is steering the ship of the state but there is an alien captain to interfere. Undiluted, unadulterated, and firmly established and unshakable invincible Independence has to be achieved and attained. We have not the slightest hesitation to confess that we do believe that Swaraj has to be won and won with blood. No alien Government holding a race in subjection can ever be philanthropic enough to clear out bag and baggage at the bidding of the subject race. Every thing in this world has a price and liberty being the most precious thing in the world demands a huge sacrifice. Either a defeat of the British in the battlefield or an internal revolution must precede the advent of Swaraj. A pitched battle is out of question. The British have emasculated Indians and the propects of an armed struggle are very remote if not entirely non-existent. Mahatma Gandhi has earned the gratitude of us all by placing an effective and sure weapon in our hands. We worship Gandhiji. We respect and

UNITED AFTER ALL! Members of the Interim Government, representing all the leading Political parties of India



(Left to right, front row) :—The Hon'ble Sardar Baldev Singh, the Hon'ble Dr. John Matthai, the Hon'ble Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, the Hon'ble Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, the Hon'ble Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan, the Hon'ble Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the Hon'ble Mr. I. I. Chundrigar, the Hon'ble Mr. Asaf Ali, the Hon'ble Mr. C. H. Bhabha.

revere him, we love and admire him but are we satisfied that we have carried out his instructions. He promised to win Swaraj in a year. This was in 1920. He gave us a programme. Did we carry it out ? No, not even a fringe was touched. We never non-co-operated with the British not even in thought what to say in practice. Off and on the country had to pass through huge struggles and one must respectfully pay tribute to thousands of men and women who helped the movement with all their might and main but all these sacrifices were nothing in camparison with what other nations had to make for their liberation. In 1942 Mahatma Gandhi agreed to lead the country to its goal by inaugurating a mass civil disobedience on a nation-wide basis. His speech on August 1942 was a clarion call for one and all to do or die. No doubt for some months after his arrest there was some stir and commotion in the country but this could not be to his liking, this was not in comformity with his line of action. This could not please him and as if to do penance for the excesses committed by his countrymen even though actuated by the best of motives but misguided and ill-advised to resort to violence, he took a 21 days' fast. He was at death's door. The Government had made all arrangements for his final rites. But God has kept him alive to guide his country during this critical period. He aspires to live for 125 years not for any personal comfort but only to see the fulfilment of his pledge to establish India on her throne before departing from this world. It would be the height of ingratitude to belittle the efforts of the Nation so far made to achieve independence but it will also be the height of folly to be over jubilant over our achievements. The problems that confronted us a generation back are still looming large in front of us. Hindu-Muslim unity is so far a dream. The exploitation of the masses is there. The immense drain of wealth continues unabated. The tyranny of the capitalist is galling, the persecution of the landlords is still as acute as ever. Poor, naked, starving, hungry, homeless masses are crying for a relief from poverty, disease, undermining of vitality, and wretched insanitary surroundings keep the mortality rate highest in the world. Infant mortality, maternity deaths, malaria and tuberculosis ravage are on the increase. An Indian is still an object of ridicule and contempt. He is being treated in his own country and abroad as a creature brought into existence to toil and work for others and to suffer and to be miserable. He is a man with duties but no rights, with responsibilites but no privileges.

Ignorance, illiteracy and indebtedness of masses are appalling. All our ills are there, the evils of subjugation are there, all

the insults and indignities are as abundant as ever. Shrijut Subhas Bose tried to liberate India with his Indian National Army. No praise would be too high for the gallantry and bravery, self-sacrifice and self-immolation of Netaji and his trusted colleagues and co-workers and yet we shall unhesitatingly say that that way did not lie our salvation. Swaraj could not be achieved that way either. No doubt every nation has an inalienable right of bringing into use all the possible weapons for extricating itself from the clutches of an alien power. No method is unfair or unjust to get rid of foreign domination. No curse is worse than slavery and there is no higher virtue than to shake off that curse. But India is unable to make any use of an armed revolution. It is unthinkable in the present circumstances. Terrorisation and sporadic and diffused acts of violence are very prejudicial to the best interests of the nation.

Our salvation lies in having a peaceful revolution. The whole of the country must rise to a man to throw off this foreign yoke. The Interim Government should utilise this opportunity to prepare the nation for a general upheaval. It should overhaul and Indianise the Army, the Police and all the services. It shall be false to itself, to its principles and to its country if it does not apply itself vigorously to equip and prepare the country for a peaceful revolution without which we shall never have Puran Swaraj. The duty of us all is perfectly clear. We must realise the importance of the nature of the task we have set before us. Desperate maladies demand desperate remedies. We regard the present phase as a lull before the storm. We cannot persuade ourselves to believe that we shall have no more battles to fight to storm the citadel of an alien bureaucracy. We will have to pass through still more fierce ordeals. We will have to tide through still more serious crises. We will have to wade through pools of our own blood to reach our goal.

We appeal to all our countrymen to realise the gravity of the situation. Swaraj shall not descend to us. We shall have to prepare ourselves to attain it. We shall have to rise equal to the occasion. The top leaders alone cannot win Swaraj. The High Command be it of the Congress or the Muslim League cannot, without the fullest co-operation of the masses, hope for any success.

Our efforts therefore must be directed to arouse the political consciousness of our countrymen. We need education on right lines. We will have to change the face of our nation. No more caste barriers. No more water-tight compartments. No more

communal strifes and struggles. We throw a thick curtain over all our past bickerings and squabbles and with a firm determination we march onwards.

Howmuchsoever difficult our task may be, it is undoubtedly very pleasant and very delightful to work for the emancipation of a country which as we have shown was the first to give life and light to mankind. India claims the credit of being the world master and the best interests of the world demand that once again it should occupy the same place among the nations. The West has failed to establish peace and goodwill among men. This task will have to be performed by the East which has always blessed the world with harbingers of peace and messengers of goodwill.

India is the mother of civilizations; it has been a land of ascetics, prophets and saints. It is a prisoner now but it is to be a giant of the future and no sacrifice is too heavy and no service is too humble to bring back the old glory of our motherland. Downtrodden and crushed beneath the heavy weight of foreign domination though it is, at the present moment, a bright and brilliant, a grand and glorious, a charming and cheering future is within sight. If we all put our shoulders to the chariot, in the most sincere and devoted manner, we can take it to its goal in no time.

Our appeal is specially addressed to the younger generation, men and women of all castes, creeds, classes and categories. They must gird up their loins and with their backs to the wall march onwards, undaunted, undismayed, undeterred and undeflected. Nothing should frighten them, nothing should cow them, nothing should intimidate them. Bayonets, bullets, bombs and incarcerations, imprisonments, detentions, executions, loss of property, nay loss of everything they have should not make them swerve an inch from their loyalty and devotion to their country. Let every young soul in India throb with only one desire, let every young man and woman be saturated with only one wish—liberty, and liberty alone. Liberation of India from foreign yoke means not only liberation of Asia but liberation of the whole world, of the whole mankind. We shall think our duty done, our task fulfilled, our objective realised and our aim satisfied if we succeed in kindling fire in the hearts of the future custodians of honour and saviours of our country. India needs resurrection which is impossible without insurrection and we shall not move a step forward unless we think dangerously, speak dangerously and act dangerously. Only this road of revolt and rebellion, peaceful and non-violent, can lead us on to our goal. Dangers are many, ditches and pitfalls are abundant, but we shall have to surmount them, we shall have

to face all dangers and win the final battle at all costs

We shall commend, to our readers, the words of Netaji who said: "Give me blood and I give you freedom." And Mahatma Gandhi's *mantram* 'Do or die' which epitomises the whole thing. Now it is for the country to give a suitable response to these marching orders of Mahatmaji and Netaji, and we trust and believe that India shall know no rest till it regains its throne, its crown, its glory, its grandeur, its position and its prestige. That day is not far off when India shall be one of the tallest if not the tallest nation in the new world in bringing peace and *shanti* to the whole world. Glory and bondage cannot go together. We must shake off our bondage to get our full share of glory. May that day dawn soon. May our hopes and aspirations be realised May we shake off our shackles and may we be once again the preceptors and guides of mankind is our earnest prayer.

